

HOSTLER BURROWS



CREATORS

20 WOMEN DESIGNERS, BOTH YOUNG AND RESURGENT, STAND SIDE BY SIDE

by Liz Logan | May 13, 2018

Egg Collective celebrates the work of trailblazing talents.

Around this time last year, the design world was abuzz over the exhibition “Designing Women,” hosted in New York’s Soho by [Egg Collective](#), a company run by an all-female team of designers: Stephanie Beamer, Crystal Ellis and Hillary Petrie. Inspired in part by the Women’s March, the show featured work from 18 of the partners’ female contemporaries, including [Lindsey Adelman](#), [Bec Brittain](#) and [Anna Karlin](#). “We received so much great energy from the design community, and immediately people started asking us if we’d do it again,” Ellis recalls.

Thus was born a second edition: “Designing Women II: Masters, Mavericks and Mavens,” cocurated by the Egg team and Lora Appleton, founder of the vintage-design gallery [Kinder Modern](#) and the Female Design Council, a professional membership organization formed just last year. This year’s exhibition (on view until June 1) takes a more expansive view of 20 women in design, with an international roster and the inclusion of historic pieces by female designers of previous generations, such as Nicola L and the late Greta Magnusson Grossman.

HOSTLER BURROWS

Also represented are Heidi Abrahamson, Kristin Victoria Barron, Cini Boeri, Winsome Brave, Nanna Ditzel, the late Mary Giles, Lilian Holm, Mimi Jung, Sabine Marcelis, Leza McVey, Mira Nakashima, Katie Stout, Marta Palmieri, Rooms, Sonwai, Natalie Weinberger and Bari Ziperstein.

“Women have always been creating and making, but in the past, it was under less than ideal circumstances,” Appleton says. “Today, with the Women’s Movement being top of mind, we have a chance to shine a light on the women who paved the way and use the lessons of their careers to move forward.”

Here, we shine a light on a few of these exceptional women designers of yesterday and today.



Mary Giles



A Minnesota native, [Mary Giles](#), who died this April, was raised by a cabinetmaker father and a mother with a passion for Norwegian rosemaling, a Scandinavian folk style of painted decoration. She studied art education and became a high school art teacher. When she took up basketry to teach it to her students, she fell in love.

Giles sought out Native American basket weavers for their expertise and took workshops with renowned fiber artists Diane Itter and John McQueen. Ultimately, she developed her own painstaking mixed-media method: hammering thousands of small pieces of wire and attaching them, like scales, to a core wrapped in waxed linen, as in her large wall sculpture *Fire Field* (2017). “I’m in awe of her level of patience,” Ellis says.

Giles’s biomorphic works were inspired by her childhood adventures in the Minnesota woods. “Her materiality is fascinating,” Appleton observes. “Horse hair, iron, wire — it’s all super sexy — not to mention difficult to work with.”