

# CURBED

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## We Asked Curators and Designers What to See This Design Week

Chen Chen and Kai Williams, Sight Unseen's Monica Khemsurov, and others weigh in.

By Isabel Ling



*Photo-Illustration: Curbed; Photos: Eric Petschek, Brooke Holm, Joe Kramm*

The city's design week, traditionally anchored by ICFF, has ballooned into a full month of events and installations. Technically, this year's NYCxDesign festival starts on May 15, but many independent galleries like Colony and TIWA have opened shows earlier in the month and emerging design hubs are adding to the geography of the fair. This year there's even a new design fair in Chelsea, Shelter, by the folks at Afternoon Light, an online furniture platform from the founders of Shoppe Object, along with a number of other group shows exhibiting emerging designers, including those showing work for the first time. There's also a fair number of new showrooms launching this May, from more established brands like Vitra, reopening in Chinatown, to Villa AM, a new West Village gallery from Amanda Pratt of Salon Design. In recent years, the industry event has also gotten a jolt of DIY energy, with designers organizing satellite events in unexpected and far-flung locations, such as "Forced Perspective," a group

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show happening in an old Greenpoint radio station, and a design performance by Nifemi Ogunro at Fort Greene's Naval Cemetery. This ad-hoc energy offers a welcome break from fair fatigue, but it can be overwhelming to sift through it all. To make sense of it, we spoke to curators, gallerists, and designers on what they're keeping an eye on at this year's festival.

Alexandra Cunningham Cameron

*Contemporary Design Curator, Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum*

This year I'm hoping to see more and more clusters of 20th-century-design exhibitions situated alongside the contemporary launches. I've noticed a particular attention to the 1980s and '90s, in particular Superhouse's show last summer of American metalworkers like Michele Oka Doner and Elizabeth Browning Jackson and Michael Bargo's upcoming "Néotù" show at Galerie Gabriel. I'm also looking forward to many shows, especially group exhibitions with strong social narratives like "Outside/In." presented by Hello Human and Lyle Gallery; "Songs of a Decoy" at Galerie Santangelo; and "The Semiotics of Dressing" at Jacqueline Sullivan.