

Designer of the Day: Matt Gagnon

Matt Gagnon's approach breaks the boundaries between art, architecture, and design—credit time spent working under Frank Gehry and Gaetano Pesce, where he perfected his craft cross multiple scales and materials. Perhaps most emblematic of his approach are Light Stacks, a series of totemic, skyscraper-like fixtures impressively rendered in brass, concrete, and white oak, and which grace such high-profile projects as Louis Vuitton's brand-new London outpost designed by Peter Marino.

BY RYAN WADDOUPS
July 28, 2020

Here, we ask designers to take a selfie and give us an inside look at their life.

Age: 46

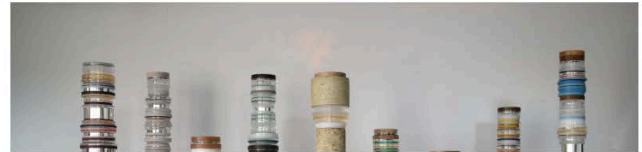
Occupation: Designer and artist.

Instagram: @mattgnon

Hometown: Danbury, CT.

Studio location: Los Angeles.

Describe what you make: I design objects, installations, and spaces. Light is very important in my work.



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Light Stacks

Winston Wächter Fine Art, Inc.

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The most important thing you've designed to date: I have an ongoing series of light sculptures called Light Stacks. A simple version of these started back in 2001 but I revisited the idea starting in 2017 as a larger, more open-ended exploration with diverse materials. I have had several gallery shows and the work has brought the studio a wider audience.

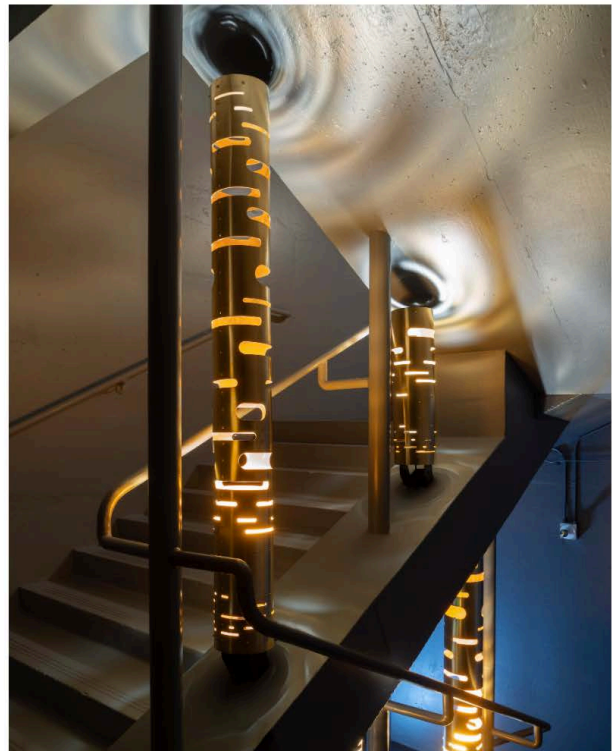
Describe the problem your work solves: I am interested in creating context for how people want to live and curious about the emotional attachments we develop for objects and spaces.

Describe the project you are working on now: I am designing a house in Venice Beach. The exterior of the building is going to be built up layers of light-filtering screens and a rich palette of material textures. The spaces will have unique characters of light encouraging different ways of living in the house based on the mood various rooms present. Instead of defining rooms by typical functions such as a kitchen or bedroom, we are thinking about how different feelings we experience at home can be amplified and sweetened by the architecture.

A new or forthcoming project we should know about: I am working on outdoor versions of my Light Stacks. We have a commission at a collector's home in Sun Valley. It's an incredible location surrounded in all directions by mountains. We're planning two 10-foot-tall blown glass and concrete stacks.

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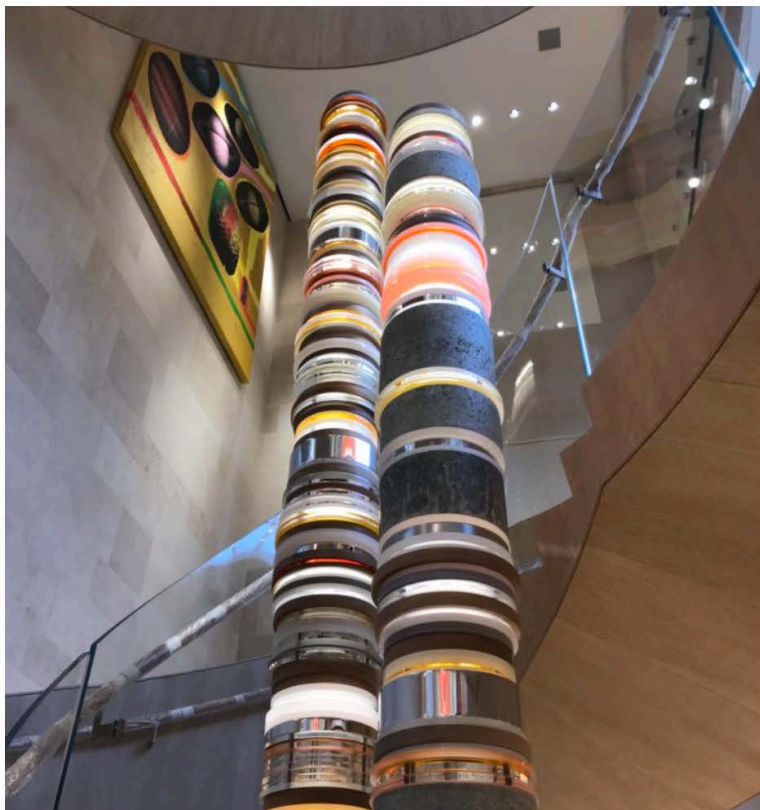


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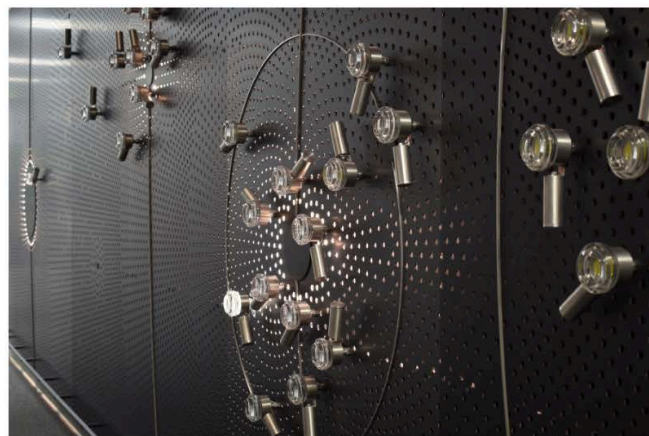


What you absolutely must have in your studio: Music is huge. There are times when a certain album resonates and I listen on repeat to hold a certain focus on a project. Recently, I played the new Car Seat Headrest album nonstop for 24 hours before a client meeting. I don't know if it informs the work, but it blocks out distraction.

What you do when you're not working: My wife is an excellent cook and we love to have people at the house and eat too much. Of course, lately that has been limited to our family.

Sources of creative envy: The list is very, very long. I try to look across creative disciplines, but one important inspiration for my ambition as an artist or designer is in Pina Bausch, the choreographer. She was a master of using a gesture to invoke a world of memory and emotion.

The distraction you want to eliminate: Doubt.



Installation at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory

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Concrete or marble? Concrete.

High-rise or townhouse? High-rises are exciting, but I live in L.A. in a single-family home.

Remember or forget? Remembering is good.

Aliens or ghosts? Aliens.

Dark or light? I need both.