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MODERN PAINTERS

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ART / ARCHITECTURE / DESIGN / PERFORMANCE / FILM

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**ROLF SACHS
LOOKS BEYOND
THE OBVIOUS**

Museum
Design
Today

**SHELTERING
OCCUPY
WALL STREET**

**KEEPING
UP WITH
KAWS**





MIRA NAKASHIMA

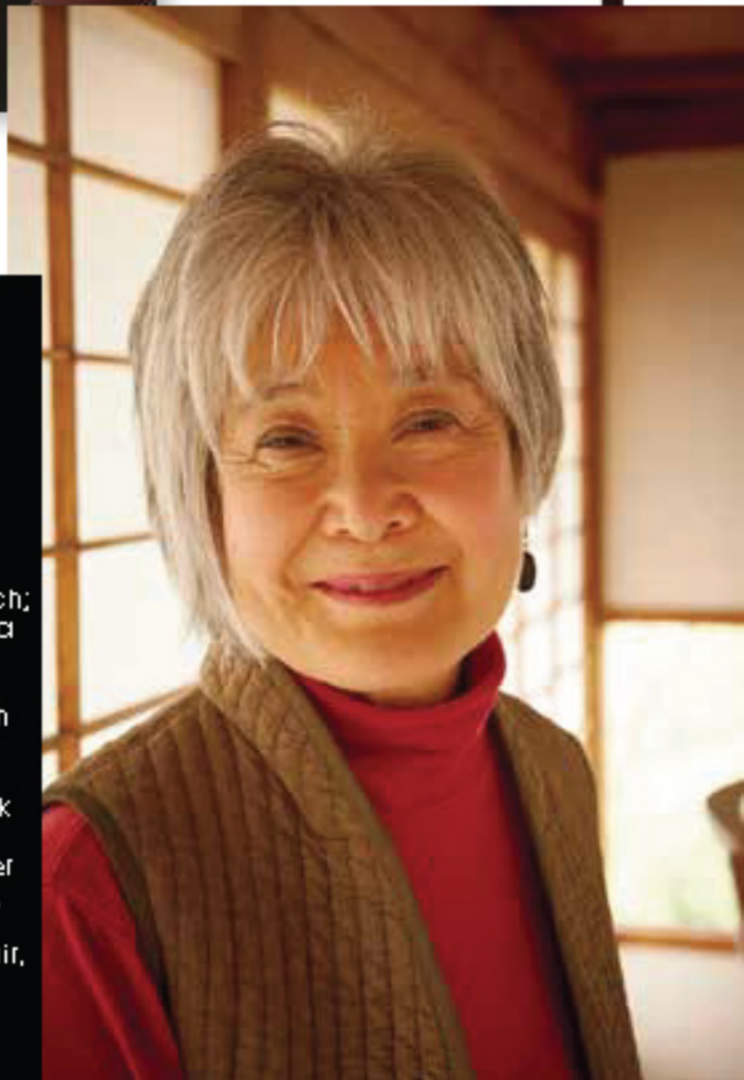
In 1990 Nakashima was charged with an enormous task: to carry on the legacy of her father, design legend George Nakashima. "Who's Mira?" collectors of his work asked, under the impression that he built all of his free-edged, organically shaped designs himself. The reality is that when she took over his New Hope, Pennsylvania, studio,



Mira had long been an integral part of his practice. "I did just about everything," she says, a statement backed up by photographs of her as a child sitting on top of her father's worktable, manual drill in hand. Now at the helm of her late father's studio, Mira strives to uphold his design aesthetic, notable for its integration of the raw edges and inherent imperfections of wood. But her most recent collection, which was exhibited in September at Philadelphia's Moderne Gallery, is arguably her most overtly independent. While the organic forms that made her father famous are still present, there are new experimental compositions based on musical ratios developed in collaboration with her design assistant Miriam Carpenter. "It isn't static," says Nakashima. "When Dad died, people thought that this was it, that we

were just doing reproductions. But we try to keep it interesting." Of the new collection, she explains that both she and Carpenter "love listening to Bach in the studio. I said we ought to do something with the musical harmony and proportion, and she said she had a book on the harmonograph, a 19th-century machine that, when you subject it to different vibrations and tones, draws various shapes. She then discovered that one of the forms created by the harmonograph was almost exactly the same as a design of my father's for [furniture manufacturer] Widdicomb-Mueller."

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Exterior of Nakashima's Conoid studio in New Hope, Pennsylvania, built in 1957; the Conoid studio interior; Reflection bench; Mira Nakashima in 2008; Sled Base coffee table, 1973, with redwood root burl top and American black walnut base; Mira helping her father, George, ca. 1945; Concordia chair, 2003, in English walnut, by Mira Nakashima.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MIRIAM CARPENTER; ESTO: CHRISTIAN GIANELLI; ED CUNICELLI; BOB HUNSICKER; NAKASHIMA WOODWORKERS; BOB HUNSICKER

ONLINE EXTRA: For a video interview with Mira Nakashima, go to blouinartinfo.com/nakashima.