

The Marketability of Lighting Today

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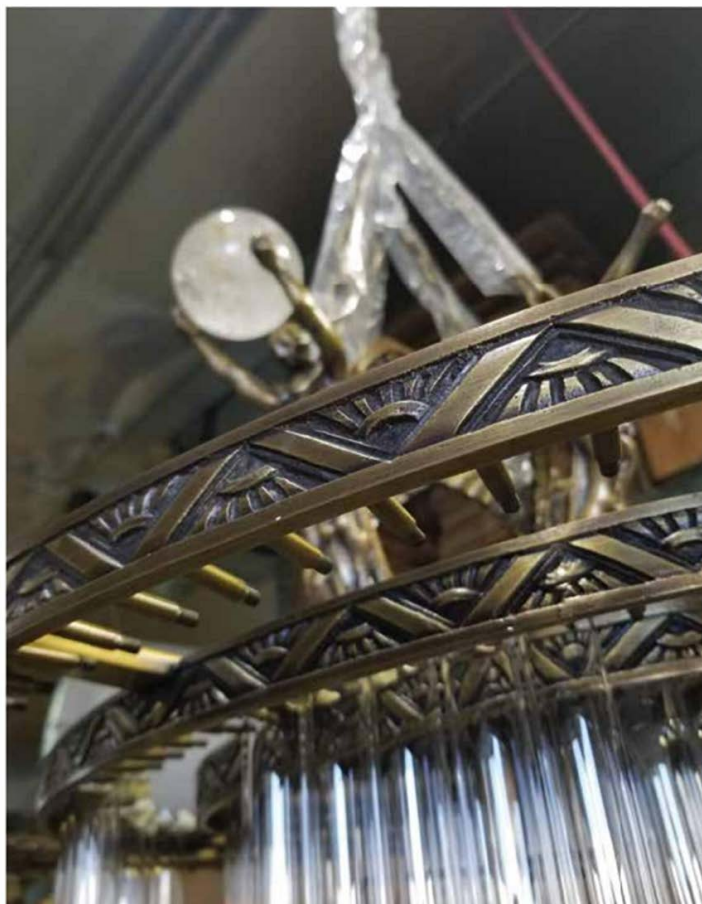
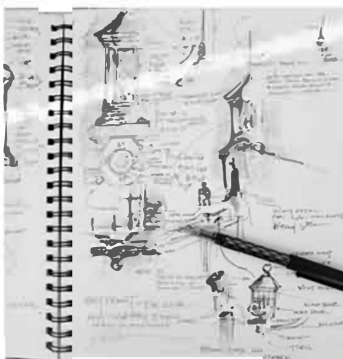


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If we all eliminate lighting from our projects, then rely upon the natural elements, do you still have a project worth illuminating? Remember the 1990's spee house filled with bad can lights? It seemed like every track model at the time repeated this failure.

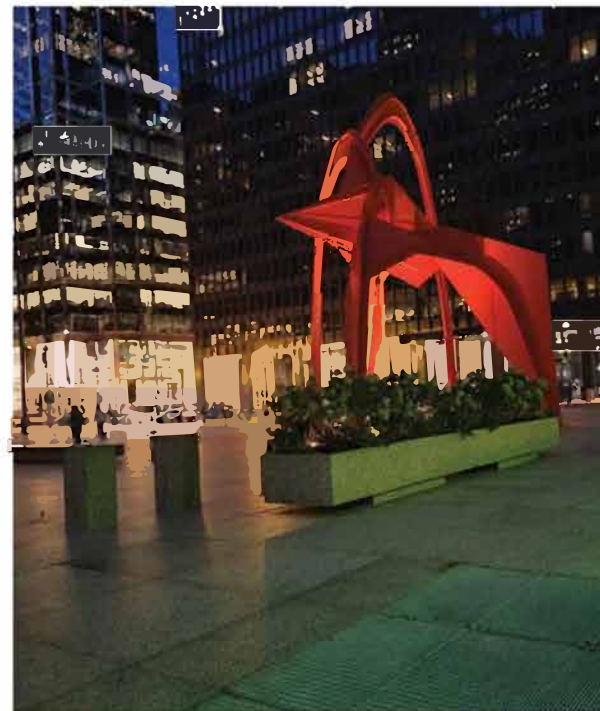
This is why trends are so unjustified to architecture. Looking back on America's history, how did we first light spaces? It was usually with fire in a fixture. But as time progressed, that fiery fixture transformed into tiny lighting diodes capable of a directed beam and output. Design integral to the architecture itself is not decoration, yet decoration is important to our lifestyle. Functional detail design is that essential moment in architecture where the process of designing an element, especially lighting, becomes part of the architecture.

Let's take the current AD 100 and the first issue of Architectural Digest. The publication was created as a California trade quarterly, and now is more about interior design and landscape that attempts to recognize the most influential interior designers and architects worldwide.



What if we take a look from the architectural perspective and note why the time-honored greats and villas around the globe are still celebrated today? These structures were designed with many of the trades involved, and lighting was an integral part of those designs.

McKim, Mead & White, Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Kahn, Elsie de Wolfe, Jean-Michel Frank and Charles and Ray Eames developed products as part of the architecture. These are some of the greats and most noted figures in history, while Tillet Lighting Design Associates and the likes of lighting designer Richard



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Kelly were influential in the collaborative process with some of these firms.

Today, only a small handful of firms design and fabricate as part of the architectural process. Other lighting companies produce a product that can be procured and placed within your projects.

The internet has defiantly created a broad range of choices, and social media reflects trends that become popularized as significant. But this doesn't focus on the light fixtures as an element that balances the famed photographs in many of the spaces, lowering their own significance.

When we fix this and look at it from a historical perspective, we can also celebrate objects. Having the balance of

good design against objects slapped into a space and then popularized is not so good. The good we should all be celebrating can be seen in the uniqueness of the fixtures and the design work and not necessarily what is popularized.

Are you among the best? I would like to hear from the unique and the few that do claim fame but are masters of their own accord. For those designers and architectural professionals that collaborate with the trades and celebrate the wins together, please write in to LA Design so that we can capture these stories in an ongoing documentation of what is good in design and architecture. LA