

## Meta Makes Miami Debut

### Exhibition of Meta Collection and Mallett Masterpieces Presents Monuments of Design Over 300 Years

### Meta Unveils Four New Special Editions

Meta

Meta, a new company launched this year by the prestigious antiques house Mallett, will make its Miami debut this December at Design Miami with *Meta: Masterpieces and Materials Past and Present*. The installation will include the U.S. premiere of four special editions, displayed alongside the inaugural Meta collection and some of Mallett's most historically important pieces of furniture and objets d'art, representing the finest examples of materials, design manufacturing and workmanship over time.

A Mallett Company

*Meta: Masterpieces and Materials Past and Present* will be on view December 3-6, 2008, from 11:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. in Mosaic Suite 100, 161 NE 40<sup>th</sup> Street (between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues) in Miami. All of the works in the public exhibition are for sale.

Continuing to set a new standard in contemporary design through the combination of 18th-century knowledge and exquisite materials with 21st-century aesthetics, Meta is unveiling four new additions to the collection, including: a special edition of the *Glissade* writing desk by Wales & Wales (Rod and Alison Wales) made of prehistoric bog oak with a yellow lacquer pen tray; a fully gilt version of Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby's *Cidade* surtout de table (candelabra) and an all-black edition of their hand-blown glass *Cupola* reading table; and Patrick Blanchard's intricately carved *Acanthus* table lamps made of translucent lime wood.

141 New Bond Street  
London W1S 2BS  
T +44 (0)20 7495 5375  
F +44 (0)20 7495 3197

929 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10021  
T +1 212 249 8664  
F +1 212 249 8784

E [hello@madebymeta.com](mailto:hello@madebymeta.com)  
[www.madebymeta.com](http://www.madebymeta.com)

Mallett & Son (Antiques) Ltd  
Registered in England 335556  
VAT Registration No GB 238 468923

The oak used for the Wales & Wales writing desk, which is carbon dated back to 3300 B.C. and was excavated from a peat bog near Cambridge, England, is exceptionally rare and required a unique process of kiln drying and immediate de-oxygenation to prevent disintegration. The desk's yellow lacquer pen tray is an exact match of the color used exclusively by the Emperor of China until the fall of the Qing Dynasty. Creating *Cidade* in vermeil, Edward Barber and Jay Osgerby have replaced clean, contemporary, highly-mirrored reflections with a warmer and enriching tone that encourages a softer play of light. Their glamorous new black reading table is a monochromatic take on the original version in Venini red, white and aquamarine. Blanchard's table lamps, reminiscent of the art nouveau period, feature flutes formed of delicately wrought acanthus leaves for a soft candle-like glow.

Meta's first collection of contemporary objects and furniture has been produced from extraordinary materials by artisans employing and testing the limits of techniques and processes inherited from the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Historical research has been carried out to rediscover lost metals of the highest standard and finest finish, from 958 Britannia silver to paktong, a re-discovered metal derived from an 18<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese candlestick, to Tula steel not used in furniture since the reign of Catherine the Great. Setting the contemporary designs against Mallett's collection of rare works from the past, the Miami installation will demonstrate how Meta's first collection combines fine detail and an expansive view of the history of design.

Giles Hutchinson Smith, Managing Director of Mallett & Son (Antiques) Ltd. says: "Over the last several years, we have noticed clients increasingly seeking our advice on where they might find contemporary furniture and objects of equal quality to their existing Mallett antique pieces. This led us to the creation of Meta and to the presentation of this special exhibition exploring the many parallels between the pieces in both collections."

Alison Sachs, Managing Director of Meta adds: "The genesis of Meta sprang from the simple idea that quality, exquisite attention to detail and thoughtful selection of materials and construction is as desirable and sought after today as it was in the past, which is demonstrated in *Meta: Masterpieces and Materials Past and Present*."

Among the Mallett pieces selected to represent the most extraordinary design and manufacturing of their time is an early 18<sup>th</sup>-century black and gilt japanned bureau cabinet that was chosen for its unusual provenance and the rarity of its elegant floral and fauna lacquer work. The japanned bureau will be displayed along with two Tord Boontje wardrobes from the Meta collection, all of which reflect a time when craftsmen vied to out-do each other's skills to attract wealthy patrons. Boontje's *Fig Leaf* wardrobe is adorned with 616 hand-painted (front and back) enamel leaves and his wood veneered *L'armoire*, like the japanned bureau, features a number of hidden drawers.

Also on view will be Mallett's pair of 1930 polished steel side tables from England, which combine clean contemporary lines with Renaissance gothic design, similar to Asymptote's (Hani Rashid and Lise Anne Couture) use of historic Tula steel and traditional etching for the *Ivo\_03* coffee table.

In addition the exhibition will include the only existing pair of Chandos armchairs, two George I gilt gesso chairs made in 1718 by the royal cabinet maker and designer James Moore for the first Duke of Chandos, which represent a high point in the decorative arts and are amongst the finest English furniture ever made. The Duke and Duchess would sit in these chairs in their music room, where they listened to The Chandos Anthems that Handel composed for them. Ironically, these luxurious chairs were created a year before one of the worst market downturns in history when the Duke lost his fortune. The sale of the chairs, amongst other works of art, helped his family to remain solvent.

Meta's Design Miami installation is designed by architect John Nastasi, whose innovative use of individual dioramas with geometric patterns derived from traditional Chinese Silk wall coverings creates an ideal environment for the integration of the Meta and Mallett pieces. Nastasi's use of rigorous geometry combined with a high level of digital craftsmanship explores the commonality of the most exquisite designs of the past 300 years.

Additionally, the installation will feature Meta's first collection of richly detailed, functional and unique pieces, designed to be lived with and enjoyed. Although each piece is available for sale, the availability of the finest master craftsmen and the particular requirements of the techniques used to create the Meta collection will often only allow a few pieces to be produced each year. In addition, the unpredictability of obtaining only the highest quality materials prevent Meta from guaranteeing that any single combination of materials, colors and finishes will be available in the future.

The original Meta pieces on display will include: Asymptote's gold boxes, *Mnemos\_01, \_02, \_03*, and their *Ivo\_03* coffee table; Barber Osgerby's original *Cupola* reading table; Boontje's *L'armoire* cabinet and grand *Fig Leaf Wardrobe* and Matali Crasset's *Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend 1* paktong lantern and wall sconces and *Diamond Are a Girl's Best Friend 2* mirror.

### **Meta and Mallett**

Meta was launched in 2008 by the venerable antiques house of Bond Street, Mallett. Founded in 1865, Mallett is one of the world's pre-eminent antiques houses, specializing in 18th-century furniture and objects. Private collectors as well as many of the world's greatest museums, from the Victoria and Albert in London to the Metropolitan Museum in New York, look to Mallett for exemplary pieces that represent an object's design, execution and pedigree. Meta carries on this tradition of dealing in exquisite objects by commissioning leading contemporary creatives worldwide to develop pieces which fuse the best of 18th-century techniques and materials with 21st-century design.

## John Nastasi, Nastasi Architects – Installation Design

John Nastasi, a practicing architect and design educator, founded Nastasi Architects in 1990. The award-winning studio is committed to the creation of architecture that is informed by philosophical thought while responsive to practical concerns. Nastasi serves as the Founding Director of the Product-Architecture Lab, an interdisciplinary Graduate Program in Product Design, Architecture and Engineering at the Stevens Institute of Technology in Hoboken, New Jersey. He is an alumnus of Harvard's Graduate School of Design, a recipient of Harvard's Rice Prize for advancement in Architecture and Engineering and a 1996 recipient of the Young Architects Award from the New York Architectural League, among other honors.

## Meta at Design Miami

Event: *Meta: Masterpieces and Materials Past and Present*

Dates: Press Preview: December 2, 2008 1–3pm  
Collector's Preview: December 2, 2008 3–6pm  
Public Exhibition: December 3–6, 2008 11am–7pm

Location: Mosaic Suite 100  
161 NE 40th Street (between 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenues)  
Miami, FL 33137

### **For further information contact:**

Aoife Carlin  
Ruder Finn Arts & Communications Counselors  
Tel: +1 212-715-1572  
Email: [carlina@ruderfinn.com](mailto:carlina@ruderfinn.com)

Neil Byrne / Amanda Kasper  
Camron  
Tel: +44 (0)20 7420 1700  
Email: [meta@camron.co.uk](mailto:meta@camron.co.uk)

### **Sales and other enquiries:**

Meta  
141 New Bond Street  
London W1S 2BS  
Tel: + 44 (0)20 7495 5375  
[hello@madebymeta.com](mailto:hello@madebymeta.com)

929 Madison Avenue  
New York, NY 10021  
Tel: + 1 212 249 8664  
[hello@madebymeta.com](mailto:hello@madebymeta.com)

[www.madebymeta.com](http://www.madebymeta.com)