

THE 50 WHO MADE ATLANTA



HOT SHOP

Jonathan Adler

The mad potter brings his cheeky style to Westside

by BETSY RILEY

ATLANTANS HAVE LONG BEEN familiar with Jonathan Adler's signature white pottery, offered by style-forward retailers such as Pieces in Buckhead and Heliotrope in Decatur. Now the New York-based designer has brought his entire "happy chic" line to an eponymous store on Howell Mill Road. Atlanta hasn't seen anything this fanciful since Sid and Marty Krofft pulled out of the Omni (see page 75).

"I love Atlanta," says Adler of his firm's first store in the South (if you don't count Miami, which we don't). "It's always struck me as a gorgeous city full of groovy tastemakers. Whenever I go to Atlanta, I just always have a really good time." And Adler apparently has been here a lot. "It's no accident that I'm putting my store right next to Taqueria [del Sol] and Star Provisions—and within striking distance of Sid Mashburn," he says. "There are definitely a few Taqueria pounds to be worked off just from visiting—and some Sid Mashburn credit card bills."

Adler, who began his career as a potter, now offers a full array of gifts, home and bath accessories, wall decor, stationery, and furniture. A "raging minimalist" in product design—seeking "economy of gesture" and the "purest form necessary"—he trends modern with his objects. But he's a "raging maximalist" when it comes to decorating, layering patterns and vibrant colors with abandon. (Why be subtle when you start with something like a turquoise faux-zebra rug?)

"There should always be an element of levity in any room," says Adler, who is also known for whimsically erotic designs, such as pottery covered in rows of bare female breasts. It's a philosophy he calls "irreverent luxury," listing tongue-in-cheek manifestos such as "Handcrafted tchotchkes are life-enhancing."

Adler is deadly serious about the "handcrafted" part of that dictum. Fundamentally, he is an artisan—even if his Rhode Island School of Design professors dismissed his work, such as a teapot with the Chanel logo, as too superficial. Some inventory is created in Peru by Aid to Artisans, a nonprofit organization that supports craftspeople in developing countries.

Affordability is another priority. A Higgins glass mobile might cost \$895, but a Utopia mug is only \$24. "Priceless antiquities can be kind of depressing," says Adler. "I don't think your home should be full of intimidating stuff." 1198 Howell Mill Road, 404-367-0414, jonathanadler.com ■

Jonathan Adler's line began with pottery such as the Muse vessels, below right, and squirrel candleholders. His new Westside store also showcases his lighting, textiles, furniture, gifts, and accessories.



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