

**Ettore Sottsass & The Memphis Group**  
*Inside a Collector's Home*

November 24, 2017 – February 23, 2018

Opening hours: Fri, 11 am – 6 pm

and by prior arrangement

**Grieder Contemporary is delighted to present the exhibition: *Ettore Sottsass and The Memphis Group – Inside a Collector's Home*, marking the official inauguration of its new gallery space in Küsnacht/Zurich.**

After extensive renovation and extension works by Fuhrmann & Hächler architects, the newly built annex of the Modernist villa is now ready to welcome Grieder Contemporary's first exhibition in Küsnacht with works by Ettore Sottsass and the *Memphis* Group. The exhibition will showcase masterpieces of the acclaimed designer and artist Ettore Sottsass, as well as other objects by members of the Memphis Group sourced from an original private interior collection from the early 1980s. Original vintage furniture and objects will send us back in time and allow us to immerse ourselves in a collector's household, a living environment transferred in its entirety to a gallery space.

Ettore Sottsass founded *Memphis* in 1980 together with former colleagues from *Studio Alchimia* and a younger generation of architects and designers. In 1981 it counted among its members Michele de Lucchi, Matteo Thun, Marco Zanini, Aldo Cibic, Andrea Branzi, Shiro Kuramata, Michael Graves, Javier Mariscal, Barbara Radice, Martine Bedin, George J. Sowden, Masanori Umeda and Nathalie du Pasquier.

*Memphis*, named after a Bob Dylan's song: *Stuck Inside of Mobile With The Memphis Blues Again*, was a successful attempt to kickstart a radical change and emancipation from the international Modernist Style of the 1960s. The group wanted to promote an innovative aesthetic, opening up to fashion and international artistic movements of the moment, such as Pop Art. By introducing a wide new range of colours, shapes, patterns and material into their design, they successfully managed to harmonise elements of a low mass culture with high end arts.

The design objects presented in the exhibition were part of a private collection assembled in the early 1980s. During this time the collector discovered Sottsass's works for Olivetti and witnessed the birth of *Memphis*. Here began a great passion. In the early months of 1982 until the end of 1987, he collected, assembled, arranged, and remodelled his whole interior with new vibes, shapes, colours and materials, all signed by Ettore Sottsass and members of *Memphis*.

**The exhibition can be visited every Friday from 11 AM – 6 PM and by appointment. For further information and images please contact Caroline Rungger at [caroline@grieder-contemporary.com](mailto:caroline@grieder-contemporary.com) or Tel. +41 43-818-56-07.**

**Ettore Sottsass** (\*1917 Innsbruck, AT † 2007, Milan, IT). He stands indisputably at the centre of the Memphis Group, which he founded in 1980 with colleagues from the *Studio Alchimia*, including also a younger generation of architects and designers. In the same year he founded the architecture and design office: Sottsass Associati, which still exists today. For the first Memphis collections he created pieces like Carlton (1981) and Casablanca (1981), which are now considered to be design icons.

**Martine Bedin** (\*1957 Bordeaux, FR). Lives and works in Rome. She studied architecture at the Ecole d'Architecture in Paris. She became acquainted with Ettore Sottsass during her stay in Florence in 1978 and initially worked in his office. In 1980, Bedin was one of the founding members of Memphis and designed the iconic lamp, *Super*, for the group's first collection in 1981. Bedin designed furniture as well as other commodities and simultaneously worked as an architect. Her objects and drawings can be found in collections like the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, Musée des Arts décoratifs et du Design, Bordeaux and in the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg.

**Michele de Lucchi** (\*1951 Ferrara, IT). He lives and works in Milan. He studied architecture at a school in Florence and worked as the chief designer at Olivetti. Together with his close friend Ettore Sottsass he founded Memphis in 1981. His best known Memphis pieces are the side table *Kristall* (1981) and the chair *First* (1983). In 1988 he opened his own studio: *Studio de Lucchi* and since 2001 he has been teaching at various Design academies in Italy. His design is represented in numerous international museums like the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Vitra Museum, Weil am Rhein and the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

**Massimo Iosa Ghini** (\*1959, Bologna, IT). He studied architecture in Florence and graduated at the Politecnico di Milano. Since 1985 he has been at the forefront of Italian design, creating illustrations, objects and environments for the *Bolidismo* group. He was a member of the Memphis group, when he also opened Studio Iosa Ghini, beginning as an architect and designer. His works can be found in various international museums and private collections. His projects have received the Good Design Award 2001 and 2004 from the Chicago Atheneum and the Red Dot Award 2003.

**Javier Maniscal** (\*1950 Valencia, ES). In 1971 he moved to Barcelona to study Graphic Design at the Elisava School. There he came into contact with comic book writers and illustrators of the time, such as Mique Beltrán, Daniel Torres and Sento. Together they set up "El rollo enmascarado", a group specialised in underground comics. In the 1980s, he worked as an interior designer and collaborated with Memphis.

**Peter Shire** (\*1947 in Los Angeles US). Lives and works in Los Angeles, USA. He studied Ceramics at the Chouinard Institute in L.A. He primarily works as a clay artist, producing large format sculptures, but he also produced for the design field. At the end of the 70s Ettore Sottsass invited him to join Memphis. During his Memphis time he produced nine pieces of furniture, one of them is the table *Brazil* (1981).

**George J. Sowden** (\*1942 Leeds, UK). Lives and works in Milan). He studied architecture at Gloucestershire College of Art, UK. In the early 70s he moved to Milan, where he started working with Ettore Sottsass and Olivetti. He was co-founder of Memphis in 1981, where he designed furniture and other commodities like carpets and lamps. In the same year he also founded his own design studio: *Sowden Design*. Since then he has collaborated with established companies and won numerous awards.

**Matteo Thun** (\*1952 Bozen, IT). Lives and works in Milan. He studied with Oskar Kokoschka at the Salzburg Summer Academy and graduated from architecture school in Florence. He was partner of *Sottsass Associati* and co-founder of *Memphis*, for which he mainly designed ceramic objects. From 1983 to 1996 he was Professor of Design at the Academy of Applied Arts in Vienna. He received numerous awards in the field of architecture, product and interior design (Red Dot Award (2015), the Green Good Design Award (2010) and the MIPIM (2016).