

Quality Is Ecology

Rick Pereira founded Manifold Design in 2005 to begin building his own line of custom, high quality furniture, after working for a cabinetmaker and an experienced interior, product and furniture designer in Rome, Italy, followed by a stint working for an ergonomic metal furniture company in Queens, NYC.

He grew up in Virginia and Texas, later receiving an undergraduate degree in engineering from the University of Virginia before being awarded a Master's from Pratt Institute in 1999.

While at Pratt, Pereira spent a semester in Rome, where he was exposed to innovative furniture designs, and in the wake of his graduate studies, returned to Rome to work for Irene Ferri, whose father was a woodworker and whose grandfather was a sculptor with works on display around the city.

He then worked for Kevin Walz, a NYC-based interior designer who spent the last 12-15 years in Rome, doing computer drafting and assisting the famous designer with product design.

About a year-and-a-half ago, Pereira and his fiancée Kathryn Tufano, executive director of the Catskill Art Society (CAS), moved to Claryville and he soon set up shop in a rented greenhouse located in the hills of Shandeele above Livingston Manor.

An industrial designer with a decade of experience in the design and production of mass-produced products as well as custom furniture, Pereira said, "I was always artistic and loved doing things with my hands."

He recently completed a high-end custom library for a client in Lew Beach, working with native America cherry, using the white-edged outer grain to accent the traditional cherry heartwood to full artistic effect, adding LED lighting "to illuminate the books and artwork."

Other custom-designed furniture is on display locally at Willow & Brown, located on Main Street in Livingston Manor.

"An important goal is to advance ecological considerations as much as possible," said Pereira. "Using local hardwoods rather than plywood made elsewhere, designing and producing small objects so that scrap wood is used rather than discarded, composting wood shavings and sawdust, and promoting better technologies such as LED lighting."

Pereira cited several Italian artists and designers who have influenced his work, including Adalberto Libera, the futurist architect, product designer Vico Magistretti, and Aldo Rossi, an architect.

Also on his list of "influences" are Frank Lloyd

Wright, Jean Prouvé, a French designer, and Danish furniture designer Arne Jacobsen.

"Rowena Reed Kostellow, a founder of Pratt's Industrial Design department, developed its curriculum, including new methods by which to teach visual skills with abstract principles and exercises," he added.

Pereira doesn't believe in planned obsolescence – a theory on rampant consumerism outlined by Vance Packard in his 1960 book "The Waste Makers," which described the impact of American productivity on the national character – and instead stresses an ecologi-

SPARE but elegant and highly functional, this table from *Manifold Design* is a future classic. PROVIDED PHOTO



Story by
Ted Waddell

cal approach to his designs and craftsmanship.

"It's important because in the end, the quality of the piece depends upon everything that comes before it. It's about full-cycle, life-cycle engineering, not just thinking about making a product as cheaply as possible, and not what happens in the end.

"My goal as an artist is to create works that are beautiful, of high quality and are practical," said Pereira. "It all works toward ecology and quality – quality is ecological."

To contact Pereira, call 985-2634 or visit <http://www.manifolddesign.com>

Rick Pereira, an industrial designer, custom furniture maker and founder of Manifold Design, lives in Claryville and is pictured working in a greenhouse studio/workshop in Livingston Manor

RICK PEREIRA has set up shop for his unique furniture business in a greenhouse near Livingston Manor.

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