

PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT

DESIGN

THE BRIGHT SIDE

TWO YOUNG TALENTS TEAM UP.



INTO THE LIGHT BRITTAIN (FAR LEFT), IN PACO RABANNE, AND HELLSTRÖM, IN AN HERMÈS SWEATER AND DELPOZO PANTS. ABOVE RIGHT: THEIR VISED VESSEL.



Brittain, 34, has studied Japanese armor while Hellström, 29, looks to ancient rock formations and anthropological silhouettes. Brittain adds, “Whereas I am all about technicality and spatiality, Hilda’s work is volumetric and material.”

The pair designed from opposite sides of the Atlantic during development, eventually translating renderings into prototypes in Brittain’s Brooklyn studio. Sure enough, the final collection, titled BB X HH and on view at the design-forward SoHo gallery Matter, feels both structural and organic, with brass rods bent like lanky, double-jointed limbs and anchored by blocks of swirling blue and white. “We wanted to create something monumental,” says Hellström. “More than what we had already accomplished on our own.” —M.T.H.

of working together. “I said, ‘Let’s play!’ without any idea of where we were heading,” says Brittain, who was taken with Hellström’s technique of layering pigmented Jesmonite plaster to create vessels that look like sedimentary rock.

The result is a seven-piece series of sconces, pendants, and floor lamps that fuses the duo’s unique points of view:

Bec Brittain, known for her futuristic-looking light installations, has a sideline of similarly avant-garde jewelry, a necklace of which caught the eye of London-based designer **Hilda Hellström**—who then proposed the idea

BOOKS

THE IMPOSSIBLE EXILE

In Mary Gordon’s quartet of novellas **The Liar’s Wife** (Pantheon), characters real and imaginary find moments of unexpected connection far from what they know. Theresa, the graduate-student heroine of the final story, flees a disastrous love affair to Tuscany, where she meets a genteel older collector who introduces her to Italy’s sensual pleasures. At the root of their bond: a shared appreciation for Renaissance sculptor Matteo Civitali. “I love him for his mixture of containment and tenderness,” Theresa explains, a description that also fits Gordon’s masterly prose.

The past is a foreign terrain in Haruki Murakami’s return to moodily romantic, whiskey-and-jazz form, **Colorless Tsukuru Tazaki and His Years of Pilgrimage** (Knopf), in which a lonely Tokyo train engineer travels back to his hometown to discover why, years before, he was cast out from his group of beloved high school friends. Estranged from a sense of home even in the midst of it, a Goan family in Bombay is at the center of Jerry Pinto’s painfully hilarious **Em and the Big Hoom** (Penguin Books), in which a young boy is alternately mesmerized and devastated by his mother’s mental illness. And a clan of Brighton Beach poets and strivers make their way in Yelena Akhtiorskaya’s virtuosic debut, **Panic in a Suitcase** (Riverhead), a wry look at immigrant life in the global age, and the gulfs between countries and generations that language, with its heady solace, can only sometimes bridge. —MEGAN O’GRADY



TELEVISION

BORDERLINE

For today’s TV heroines, difficult is the new likable. Maggie Gyllenhaal’s **Nessa Stein** manages to be both in **The Honorable Woman**, Sundance Channel’s eight-part thriller that swirls together *Homeland* and *Tinker Tailor Soldier Spy*. Torn between two wildly different realities—she’s in the House of Lords and the daughter of a murdered arms manufacturer—Nessa is devoted to promoting peace between Israelis and Palestinians. These efforts lead her into a minefield of kidnapping, murder, and betrayal. Who can she trust: the slippery head of British intelligence (a terrific Janet McTeer), the slouchy Middle East expert (Stephen Rea), the Israeli family friend (Igael Naor), the soulful Palestinian nanny (Lubna Azabal)? Just as important, can they trust *her*? Cleverly written by British TV veteran Hugo Blick, the show serves up twists and ambiguities that will keep you wondering. —J.P.