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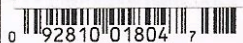


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A Design Lover's
Guide to London

Artistic Bent

Tanya Aguiñiga's touchable pieces blur the boundaries between furniture and sculpture.



Some artists communicate through paint on canvas. Others carve their vision into stone. Never one to follow a crowd, Tanya Aguiñiga opts for felt on furniture in order to get her message across. Aguiñiga—whose career was launched when she ingeniously covered 15 folding chairs with colorful felt—uses the bright colors of Mexico, the country where she grew up, and highly textured materials, such as rope, plastic, wool and leather, to craft soulful pieces that turn tradition on its head.

Her Atwater Village warehouse, nestled among a group of Craftsman bungalows, is a hive of artistic activity. On this particular day, Aguiñiga and a team of interns are busy making made-to-order furniture, rope bracelets and textile art out of 75 shredded Mexican blankets. The diversity and number of projects in play necessitate that all the worktables and tools be on wheels. “I do everything in here from felting to welding. Right now it’s set up for felting and dyeing, but when it’s time to weld, everything has to be moved out and covered.”

Tanya Aguiñiga, aguinigadesign.com

we ♥ Tanya STOCK: aguíniga

Birds - LFA
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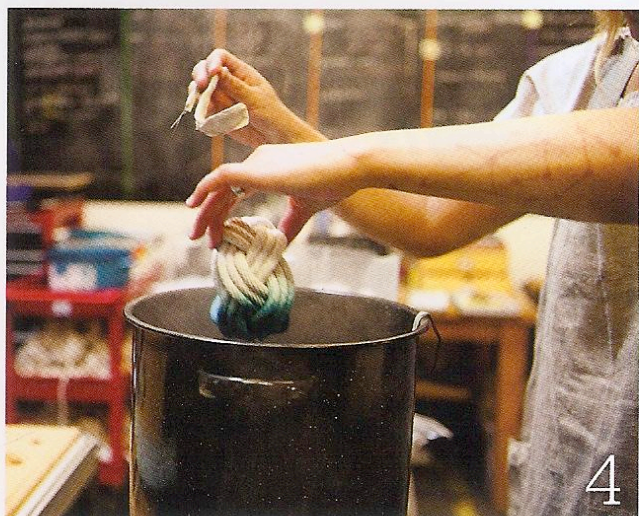
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1. Aguiñiga is inspired by the colors and textures that fill her creative space. "Just looking at random stuff, like my collection of threads, helps me come up with new ideas," she says. 2 & 3. Aguiñiga's experiments with nautical rope led to a jewelry line. Now the cotton pieces range from tastefully unraveling necklaces to classic Turk's Head knot cuffs, which are dyed and adorned with brass, metal leaf and leather. 4. Each rope piece is hand knotted before being steeped in hot dye for 30 minutes. 5. "I didn't really use any tools until I was 18," says Aguiñiga, who studied woodworking, metalworking and ceramics at San Diego State University and the Rhode Island School of Design. "But I have always drawn and made crafty things."





1. Each of Aguiñiga's felted folding chairs is made with about a pound of wool and takes nearly 30 hours to complete. "The wool has to be massaged for 24 hours until all of the fibers join together to make a seamless skin around the object," says Aguiñiga. 2. Sketches, photographs and plans fill an inspiration board. 3. Aguiñiga models her cotton rope jewelry. 4. While constructing another stool, Aguiñiga shapes the foam form with an electric carving knife. 5. Felt results when wool is exposed to hot liquid and friction. Here, Aguiñiga creates a felt skin for a stool by rubbing wool with olive oil soap and water.

