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VOLUME 11, ISSUE 4 | DISPLAY UNTIL 1/13/14



Company K's Jack Kearney collaborates with architects, interior designers and craftsmen, and devises his own designs, as well, like this blackened-steel plate stair with a narrow slit. *Opposite:* The interesting objects found in New York's De Vera appeal to Kearney's curious side.

PORTRAIT: RIC PETERSON. OPPOSITE: DON FREEMAN. TOP RIGHT: MARK JOHNSTON.

Jack Kearney, Company K founder and lead designer, is a modern-day Renaissance man made of equal parts industrial craftsman, sculptor, sketch artist, builder and junkyard connoisseur. "There are lots of fabrication shops out there that make pieces for designers and lots of designers who use fabricators, but we are both," he explains. While living in New York working as a residential designer, he noticed that there was a disconnect in the creative process and decided to open up shop in Seattle. "I wanted to close the loop and be able to design and build under one roof," he remembers. Whether he and his team of artisans are cladding custom walnut cabinets in 1/4-inch-thick belting leather, transforming a gritty steel plate pulled from a salvage yard earlier in the week into a dining table, or meticulously machining a piece of hardware for a custom pivot door, his approach remains the same. "My work is simple, but simple is a four-letter word," he says. "To achieve something that's very simple is very *hard* because it's pure craftsmanship." *companyk.com; 206.632.0509*

Kearney designed and built the Reed chair using woven split-reed fibers along a steel frame; a hinged detail allows the frame to rock.



CRAFT MASTER

JACK KEARNEY



DESIGN ICON:

Carlo Scarpa. The craftspeople he used and what he accomplished in the era when he worked was unbelievable. And Constantin Brancusi—the way he assembled things in the time frame he did astounds me.

BEST SALVAGE FIND:

I once found a beautiful steel plate that had been lying in the dirt for over 40 years. Trucks were literally driving over it every day so the patina was amazing. I turned it into a table.

FAVORITE SHOP:

De Vera in New York. The owner has a crazy eye and finds the wackiest objects that are still so precious—everything from a great Japanese teapot to handmade jewelry and religious iconography.

DESIGN PERIOD YOU FIND MOST ENGAGING:

I tend to be inspired less by periods and more by culture: Japanese, Italian and Scandinavian. Stylistically they're different, but really they're all the same in the sense that from packaging to the architecture, everyone there appreciates good design.