



The Spanish conquest From left, a prototype from the new Lladró Fantasia collection; Hayon's Camper shoe range; a Josephine Gold lamp for Metalarte.

chairs. Hand-painted plates are affixed to the ceiling of the private dining room, and kitschy deer-head planters decorate the ultramodern bathrooms.

At the center of this visual extravaganza is Jaime Hayon, looking very much the part of transgressive designer in green Camper shoes of his own design, baggy trousers, a slim gray blazer and the blue-frame glasses that have become his trademark. "I wanted this space to be very theatrical," he says. "Every element references my personal creative universe." Walking to the restaurant's outdoor terrace and taking in the sweeping views of the city center, Hayon ponders one final touch. "Most of these historical buildings have emblematic sculptures on the roof," he says. "I'd love to do my own version here — maybe a giant clown."

Serious clowning around has made the 33-year-old Hayon one of the most talked-about up-and-comers in the design world. He got his big break in 2003 with his "Mediterranean Digital Baroque" show at London's David Gill gallery, which consisted of an assortment of, uh, ceramic cactuses. More functional but equally whimsical pieces followed, like his spindly collection of bathroom furnishings for ArtQuitect and the ocean-blue lacquered Multileg Cabinet for Bd Ediciones, which has up to 24 interchangeable legs in a variety of architectural styles. His installation for Bisazza last year at Milan's Salone Internazionale del Mobile consisted of a larger-than-life mosaic Pinocchio surrounded by a surreal assortment of plinths, vases and hanging lamps.

Hayon's trajectory is as unconventional as his work. He left his native Madrid as a teenager to skateboard in San Diego, where he developed a passion for the graffiti-inspired graphics of skate decks and T-shirts. (Hayon also exhibits and sells his artwork; a fan once asked him to personally tattoo one of his doodles on him and he happily obliged.) He then studied design in Madrid, and landed a scholarship at École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, in Paris, where Philippe Starck was teaching. At 22 he moved to Fabrica, Oliviero Toscani's creative camp in Treviso, Italy, where he stayed until 2004.

After that, Hayon moved to Barcelona and London and landed gigs that include revamp-

Grand Jester

JAIME HAYON MAKES EXTRAVAGANCE POP. ARMAND LIMNANDER GOES FOR BAROQUE.

Casino de Madrid is one of the Spanish capital's most traditional members clubs, housed in an august building with a musty neo-Gothic library, sweeping staircases, painted vaulted ceilings and heavy-lidded patrons who look like they haven't stirred from their well-worn sofas since the institution was founded in 1836. On the top floor, however, in the recently reopened La Terraza del Casino

restaurant, the atmosphere is somewhat different.

Rickety elevator doors open to reveal an airy space lined with a wall of beveled mirrors. The floor shimmers with large black and white checks, and oddly shaped Romanesque columns that could have been designed by a precocious child on Ritalin punctuate the room. There are vases with gold polka dots, oversize nouveau-baroque chandeliers, doors with jewel-shaped insets and imperiously mismatched

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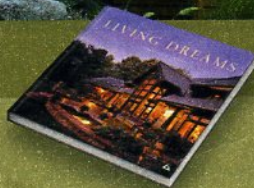
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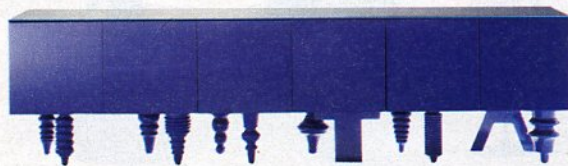


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Support group Hayon's Multileg Cabinet can be customized with a playful assortment of legs.

a store for the footwear label Camper (he also designed a few shoes while he was at it); creating Champagne buckets for Piper-Heidsieck; and overseeing a quirky porcelain range for the Spanish manufacturer Lladró. What serious tchotchke collector wouldn't appreciate the figurine of a man with alien ears and a duck beak on the side of his head, holding a heart-shaped scepter and wearing what appears to be a Michelin Man puffy jacket?

As dissimilar as these collaborations may appear, they all bear Hayon's instantly recognizable flourishes. His Lladró characters, for example, wear Camper shoes and sit on chairs that, he says, "I could make for Moroso or Cappellini tomorrow." And whether it's a curvy table lamp for Metalarte or the interior of the new Villa Moda

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store he's completing in Dubai, Hayon's playful shapes and riotous hues feel especially relevant at a time when fashion runways are chockablock with the colors of a Rubik's Cube and iconoclasts like Ettore Sottsass, Garouste et Bonetti and John Baldessari are once again on collectors' radars.

"I'm a big believer in learning by doing, and I have ideas to last me a lifetime," says Hayon, who is most excited about a recent commission to design a building in Dubai. "I'm not an architect, but not knowing everything can be an asset when you're creating because you're not limited by what you think is impossible. Plus, you can always find someone to help with practical details — what matters most in the 21st century is having a great concept."

In an average month, Hayon might crisscross between China, Japan, Dubai, Italy and Spain, yet the constant juggling doesn't seem to faze him. His idea of relaxation is sketching new "megalactic" inventions in his notebooks, developing the "American Château" show he's looking to install at an art gallery with his girlfriend (the Dutch photographer Nienke Klunder) or working on his yellow Karmann Ghia from the early '70s. That's not to mention the book he's releasing later this year: "I think I'll call it 'Jaime Works I' because I'm sure there will be 'Works II' and 'III,'" he says. "If there's one thing I've got perfectly clear in my mind, it's that I want to die with a pencil in my hand." ■