

SHOWROOMS

MADE MODERN

A new design showroom and gallery in Beacon Hill features contemporary pieces that emphasize craftsmanship.

By Marni Elyse Katz // Photography by Jessica Delaney

Amanda Pratt is on a mission to elevate the design scene in Boston. In October, the financier-turned-fashion exec-turned designer opens the doors to **Salon**, a showroom and gallery that will introduce the city to cutting-edge contemporary brands in an environment meant to evoke the look and feel of a real home. While the gallery side will channel a museumlike vibe, the showroom, which will include a garden café, will feel like someone's library or a cool but cozy hotel lounge. "The idea is to showcase contemporary elements in a relatable format," Pratt says. "I want people to see how they can interlace these pieces with other styles."

Craftsmanship is the focus: "Atelier design rather than factory made," Pratt emphasizes. "You won't find B&B Italia here." Instead, expect work from makers who specialize in small-batch production. There will be lights by Rosie Lee, ceramics by BZippy & Co. and wallpaper by Abigail Edwards. Ben & Aja Blanc have created exclusive pieces for Salon,

and Pratt will offer vintage furniture upholstered in textiles by lines she represents, including Eskayel and AVO.

On the gallery side, Pratt will debut original and limited-edition furniture—the types of pieces that museums might acquire. The first gallery show will highlight work by Ayako Aratani and Evan Fay of Detroit-based studio Aratani • Fay. "The duo experiments with expressive and irregular forms to soften the architectural nature of their designs," says Pratt. "The show will expand on the Lawless series by shrinking the scale of their work to incorporate forms that can be seamlessly placed in urban residential spaces."

Pratt, who hails from Ontario and lived between Manhattan and Hong Kong for 15 years before settling in Boston in 2016, has her finger on the pulse of the international design scene. In addition to scouring international furniture fairs, Pratt, a self-

described "sourcing nerd," attends student thesis shows at design schools for local talent. "For so long, Europe was at the forefront of design, but there's been a shift," she says. "American makers are doing most of the truly original and interesting things right now. That most of the makers are women is not exactly a coincidence. "They have a unique perspective," she says. "And I have three daughters; I want to be an advocate for women." 122 and 126 Charles St., salondesign.us



In her showroom, located in an airy, historic Beacon Hill storefront, Pratt highlights female-designed collections.