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# THE ILLUMINATORS

*Get to know the three design studios shining a spotlight on innovative lighting.*

BY MISHAL CAZMI



## Josh Metersky and Aiden Bowman, Trueing Studio

Co-founders Josh Metersky and Aiden Bowman have a background in mechanical engineering and art history respectively, a combination that has informed the vision and work of their Brooklyn-based lighting and furniture design studio. “Our sensibility walks the line between aesthetic and technical. We’re always interested in working from the capabilities of any given material, expanding what’s possible with often-overlooked items.” Take, for example, their latest lighting collection, Cerine, which reimagines the humble chain link as a statement lighting piece created using delicate glass. Each light fixture is elevated into elegant, functional art in the form of a sconce, pendant, or floor lamp. The collection, showcased at Japanese label Pas de Dalais’s boutique in SoHo, New York, also signals a new direction for the design duo: “We’ve moved towards making larger-scale pieces that test the boundaries of what can be done with our favourite material, glass.”

Cerine floor lamp by Trueing Studio

Cerine collection: photo courtesy of Trueing Studio.

Halo collection: photo courtesy of Mandalaki Studio. Candy collection: photographed by Maja Karen Hansen.

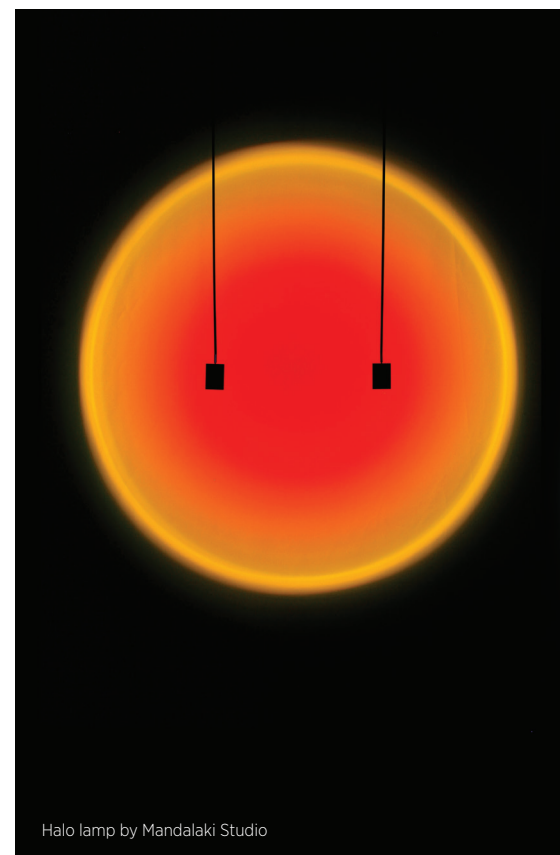


The Cherry On Top collection by Helle Mardahl

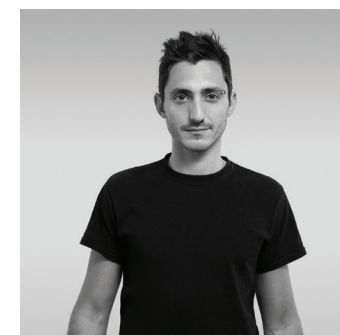


## Helle Mardahl

Danish designer Helle Mardahl once dreamt of opening her own candy shop. A few years later, she created the Candy collection, transforming blown-glass lamps into giant pieces of candy inspired by the shops she’d visited as a child. The assortment of colourful pastel lamps and decorative objects comprises different shapes and sizes, adding a dash of Willy Wonka-esque whimsy. The Copenhagen-based Central Saint Martins graduate’s primary medium is glass, which is mouth-blown piece by piece. “It’s organic all the way, from the shape to the material to the process,” says Mardahl. “I let the glass behave the way it wants to.” As a result, no two pieces are ever alike and all are available in limited quantities. When it comes to finding inspiration, she’s always on the lookout for new shapes and designs: “I think in terms of shapes and colours constantly, so everything can inspire me.”



Halo lamp by Mandalaki Studio



## George Kolliopoulos, Mandalaki Studio

The name Mandalaki translates to “laundry clip,” a Greek word that’s “synonymous with balance and simplicity, reliability and sustenance,” says co-founder George Kolliopoulos. It also perfectly exemplifies the Milan-based design studio’s ethos. Whether designing an electric concept car made from 80 percent recycled plastics (Birò O2) or the first eco-friendly micro-home in Rhodes, Greece (Monocabin), the design firm eschews trends in favour of relevant and quality design. It’s also responsible for Halo, a collection of colour-projecting lights showcased at this year’s Milan Design Week. The four variations of the lamp merge art and technology to illuminate spaces with a bold spectrum of light. In every project, Mandalaki’s DNA is evident in details both big and small: “Extremely simple shapes conceal and integrate years of meticulous technical and aesthetic research, by resulting in iconic and recognizable pieces,” says Kolliopoulos.