



## Celestial Beings

The Lara Bohinc expression of design.

Writer **Shonquis Moreno**

Most people know Lara Bohinc for the jewellery she designs, her pieces suggesting a certain brand of femininity: charismatic, cool headed, comfortable in your own skin. They are adornment for the sort of person who doesn't need to be bejewelled to feel precious. Full of contradictions, her jewellery is muscular but fluid, mineral and ethereal, a confusion of gravity and glamour—which is a fair description of her furniture, too. This April at Salone Internazionale del Mobile in Milan, following a gradual return to designing furniture over the past four years, Bohinc launched her first seating collection. Since the *World Is Round* is a series of boldface, balletic chairs that demonstrate her continuing cross-discipline fascination with geometry and the movements of heavenly bodies.

Although she has lived in London for more than 20 years, more recently with a husband and daughter, Bohinc was born and grew up in Ljubljana, Slovenia, where much of her family still lives. She graduated in industrial design from the city's Academy of Fine Arts and Design, then earned a master's in metalwork and jewellery at London's Royal College of Art in 1996. For her RCA graduation show, she created headpieces and veils that drew the attention of editors at British *Vogue*. "It was with those pieces that people started asking me to make things," Bohinc recalls, "and before I knew it, I was in business." Fresh out of school all while creating her own jewellery, Bohinc also consulted for companies like Gucci, Cartier—where she stayed for more than 10 years—followed by Montblanc.

It was an invitation from *Wallpaper\** magazine to participate in its 2014 *Handmade* exhibition that drew her back to furniture.

**Photos:** Lara Bohinc's Celeste chair and console (above); vases from her Fortress collection in blue and bronze (right).

Paired with the tile and stone specialist Lapidica, she created the Solaris kinetic table. It consists of four stacked round marble slabs that rotate smoothly on a spindle, making the 450-kilogram table easily reconfigurable and able to almost double in size when the slabs achieve their full "orbit". Comments Bohinc, "Tables are usually very static things. It took a lot of findings, but I wanted to include an element of movement—when touched, it glides toward you."

Bohinc revisits themes, as she did with her Solaris tables and Solaris jewellery, drawing out long through-lines of inspiration. "Science and geometry are the common thread," she says. In fact, many pieces share similar titles—Lunar, Solar, Moon, Planetaria, Eclipse—making it difficult to do a search on her website. She combines these mysteries with homages to craftsmanship and pairs baroque, gem-like materials with minimal forms.

In 2016, she set up Bohinc Studio in order to focus more on furniture and objects for the home, including lighting. "I felt limited by the small scale [of jewellery]," she admits. "With furniture, you don't have to worry about whether or not you can pull it through a sleeve." Recent collections have played with deconstruction and collision, which has also featured in her jewellery, to great effect: her first lighting design, the Collision pendant and table lamp, cracks a sphere into symmetrical quarters. "Ancient modernity" was the oxymoron behind her gothic-looking Jesmonite Relic lights, while the displaced hexagonal blocks of the Fortress vases are also a hybrid of age-old and futuristic forms, inspired by the octagonal towers of Diocletian's Palace, located in Croatia. Each new exploration of a familiar theme draws out something unexpected. "I want to work on the same things over and over again," Bohinc says. "Sometimes it takes many years before I do the final version, but when I come back to it, I improve it in a way that I didn't think would be possible." ●

PHOTOS PROVIDED BY BOHINC STUDIO.

