

GAGOSIAN GALLERY



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Marc Newson | On the Go at Gagosian

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Gagosian Gallery Marc Newson's Aquariva.

Defying economic reality — and reality, period — the Gagosian Gallery is returning some glamour to travel with [“Transport,” an exhibition opening today](#) (through Oct. 16) and spotlighting the work of designer Marc Newson. Comprising full-scale models and working examples, this spare-no-expense undertaking covers the breadth of the London-based Australian’s innovative, hyper-styled vehicle designs, from his Ford 021C urban concept car (1999) and carbon fiber Biomega bicycle (2008) to the 2007 EADS Astrium Space Plane prototype and the freshly unveiled Body Jet jetpack. Easier on the tongue, however, is the highlight: the Aquariva by Marc Newson, the designer’s new take on the leisure speedboats of the legendary Italian company Riva.

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The 33-foot nautical craft is easy on the eyes, too: Dominating Gagosian's space at 522 West 21st Street, it's all seamless sweeps and rounded edges. Newson has a knack for teasing a decadence of style out of minimal gestures. And in a collaboration with Riva's designers, Officina Italiana Design, his Aquariva packs the boat maker's storied Mediterranean sex appeal — think Brigitte Bardot and Sophia Loren — into a retro-futuristic package of anodized aluminum, turquoise upholstery and, for the decking and instrument panels, phenolic composite (a wood-grain precursor to fiberglass) instead of the traditional mahogany. Enthusiasts may also note the split cabin door and wrap-around laminated glass windscreed — and, especially, the space-age transom at the rear of the boat.

Newson, who spent his most recent vacation on the waters around the Greek island of Ithaca, said, "If you ask old Riva aficionados, 'Which part of the boat says the most to you?' it would be the transom, so it was a slightly dangerous element to take on — akin to a plastic surgeon changing the eyes or nose of a famous beauty."

The designer, who's also known for his bubbly plastic dish racks and ultra-luxe Ikepod watches (one model of the latter is for sale at the Gagosian Shop on Madison Avenue), makes no apologies for his fascination with transport. You won't hear much about carbon footprints or theories on globalization. "A lot of major objects of today are badly designed, especially cars, boats and aircraft interiors," he said. "Therefore, I see there is huge scope for designers like me to improve on the situation."

As for his Aquariva at Gagosian (where he previously showed five- and six-figure-priced furniture carved from solid Carrara marble), it's available in an edition of 22 — at a price of 1 million euros (\$1.28 million) each. But given that a 1988 prototype of Newson's Lockheed Lounge chaise sold for \$2.1 million last spring, that almost sounds like a bargain.