



School of the Art Institute  
of Chicago

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**SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO STUDENTS LAUNCH UNIQUELY DESIGNED  
PRODUCT COLLECTION AT THE WORLD-RENOWNED MILAN DESIGN WEEK**

***SAIC partnered with Chicago-based bespoke foundry and fabricator West Supply  
to help students take their products from concept to creation***

CHICAGO—The School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC), a global leader in art and design education, announced the launch of Potluck, a collection of uniquely designed objects created by students studying in the School's Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects (AIADO) department. The collection will be revealed at Spazio Rossana Orlandi during Milan Design Week in Italy, April 17–22.

The Potluck collection consists of 16 products fabricated in partnership with Chicago-based foundry West Supply. This is the 11th year the school is showcasing work from its students at the annual international design fair.

Developed as part of *whatnot studio*, students worked with form, scale, and function to develop products that address the nuanced relationship between borders and food through objects. Encompassing cutlery, utensils, collages, and decorative items, the objects include:

- A set of serving utensils that make sound when handled
- A series of grappling hooks designed to overcome a corresponding prototype of the proposed border wall between the United States and Mexico
- A performative object that recalls humanity's ancient and evolving connection to fire
- A collection of objects that reimagine the grocery checkout line as a uniquely dynamic habitat
- A cheese press with interchangeable cheese molds that employs indigenous flower patterns to highlight the rich history and geographical migration of cheese making
- A cup for consuming air that brings our relationship to our environment and to consumption to the forefront
- A collage of imagery comprised of both fish and chicken features
- A pepper grinder made for a single peppercorn at a time
- A flatware set designed for eating dog meat
- A set of flasks that formally and functionally reference udders
- A glass-and-rubber egg case
- A series of crates highlighting three commonplace products which are restricted and deemed hazardous by various governments
- A wall-light that questions long standing distinctions between the natural, the artificial and the sublime
- A low-functioning water fountain that considers the looming state of our global water supply
- A vase, candelabra and teapot in one that explores American Midwest dining table manners and décor
- A collection of aluminum objects for pet chickens

SAIC is one of only a few American colleges whose students have the opportunity to participate in the annual Milan Design Week. The products created are entirely conceived, designed and produced by undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in SAIC's yearlong Milan External Partnerships class, taught and curated by Professors Peter Oyler and Jim TerMeer.

"The Milan External Partnerships class was started 11 years ago by the School of the Art Institute of Chicago to give students the opportunity to gain invaluable real-world experience and show their work alongside some of the world's most renowned designers during Milan Design Week," said SAIC Professor Pete Oyler. "Our partnership with West Supply allows students the ability to pursue their ideas from start to finish, bringing their product designs through the development process and understand the impact of materials and production on the design."

Milan Design Week runs April 17–22, and SAIC's Potluck collection will be featured and available for purchase at the Spazio Rossana Orlandi, Salone del Mobile, Via Matteo Bandello 14, 20123 Milano.

To access high-resolution images and product information, visit [saic.edu/whatnot](http://saic.edu/whatnot).

### **About the *whatnot studio***

The *whatnot studio* brings design experiments to life as real products. Positioned as a commercial brand, *whatnot* is also a progressive educational platform focused on creative inquiry matched to iteration, systems of production and the nuances of the marketplace. The yearlong class gives students the space and time to find their voice as independent designers and the resources to produce fully realized, original products that are launched to the public during Milan Design Week. This is the 11th consecutive year in which emerging designers from SAIC will debut new work in Milan.

Potluck is created through the Milan External Partnerships Studio as part of the School of the Art Institute of Chicago's Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects department. The Milan External Partnerships Studio course, directed by professors Pete Oyler and Jim TerMeer, takes students through the entire product development process from conceptualization to production.

### **About the School of the Art Institute of Chicago**

For more than 150 years, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) has been a leader in educating the world's most influential artists, designers and scholars. Located in downtown Chicago with a fine arts graduate program consistently ranking among the top programs in the nation by *U.S. News and World Report*, SAIC provides an interdisciplinary approach to art and design as well as world-class resources, including the Art Institute of Chicago museum, on-campus galleries and state-of-the-art facilities. SAIC's undergraduate, graduate and post-baccalaureate students have the freedom to take risks and create the bold ideas that transform Chicago and the world—as seen through notable alumni and faculty such as Michelle Grabner, David Sedaris, Elizabeth Murray, Richard Hunt, Georgia O'Keeffe, Cynthia Rowley, Nick Cave, Jeff Koons, and LeRoy Neiman.

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