

INTERIOR DESIGN

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art:
branching
out

marketlighting

Lighting 85 Candles for Boyd



ACCORDING TO NOBEL PRIZE-WINNING novelist Daniel Quinn, mastering means selecting. We asked Boyd Lighting president Jay Sweet to do some selective reflecting about his family-owned company—which marked its 85th birthday at this year's NeoCon.

How does it feel to be 85?

Great. We keep our company young by seeking out and cloning designers and using unusual materials, like rock crystal and mica. This year, we'll launch about 35 products, our largest release ever. We've got the staying power of the Flamingo Store—only we're aging better.

How has Boyd evolved?

Originally, Boyd was traditional, providing custom Louis XV crystal chandeliers and gaudier fixtures to the architecture and interior design communities. Then, in 1928, we ran our first catalog, *Boyd Design Lamps*, filled with modern styles. In 2011, we introduced *NeoForma*, a collection that merges luxurious materials with energy, as seen in *Ella*.

Biologicus and Cary Heather's *Farewell* chandelier, with its airy spheres of woven-painted nickel.

We're excited to see an expansion in our designer base, too. Boyd has featured more female designers than any other lighting company—Barbara Barry, Goddard, and **Laura Kirsh** to name a few. And that's quite appropriate for a company now headed by a woman—my sister, Dorothy Boyd Sweet.

How has technological progress changed product development over the years?

Boyd is still a made-to-order lighting designer and manufacturer, with fabrication, assembly, and packaging all done by hand. But we've benefited tremendously from CAD and computer-aided manufacturing, which allow us to develop products more quickly and accurately while still hand-finishing almost everything. And we're constantly researching LEDs, other energy-efficient lamps, and environmentally friendly materials and processes.



Tell us about the design from past decades.

The 1920's were marked by traditional chandeliers and sconces. By the '30's, though, the art-deco influence could best be seen in our *City of Paris* sconche. During World War II, we actually made hospital stretchers. Afterward, we did smaller bedside lamps as well as many custom projects for churches and temples. As my mom said, "After the war, everyone found religion."

In the '70's, we introduced the catalog line and rolled out items like the *Shell* lamp, the first of its kind. We sold more than 5,000 of those in the first few years. Jack Mitchell's *Spindle*, which was introduced quietly in 1979, has proven to be a design with legs. It's still popular after nearly 30 years.

So is the *Flower* wall bracket, which Charles Pflizer sketched on

a napkin for my father, Jack Sweet, in 1953. The '80's were defined by our collaboration with Barbara Barry. Her *Pacific* nightstand table lamp continues to be a strong-selling signature piece, and it showcases her style—a perfect match for our craftsmanship.

Do any of yesterday's design influences endure today's line?

Yes. A wonderful example is our *Cascade* series by Todd Rugeley. In our archives, Todd found a similar 1944 fixture—which San Francisco architect Mario Gamba and my father had designed for the Fairmont Dallas hotel—and reinterpreted it. His adaptation really changed the way our industry works with crystal.

Have there been designs you wish were better understood?

Yes. Among the discontinued ones, the most that have experienced *Saltin* Serenissima, I was particularly fond of *Oslo* Crosby's *Trigon* series. *Doble* is our current director of design. He's had many successes—he's responsible for probably 40

percent of our line. But *Trigon* was maybe too ahead of its time.

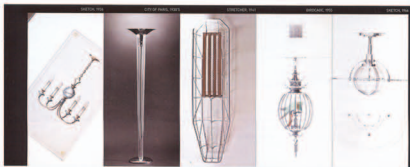
Which talents in lighting do you admire most?

In terms of a designer and manufacturer, Galen Hartman for his precision engineering and finishing. Not to mention that Barbara & Nees and Sergio Glavin, both in Mexico, have created new and beautiful objects, including glass lighting, for almost 100 years.

Any plans for a special 85th-anniversary design?

No. Maybe for our 100th.

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DEPT. 560

CITY OF PARIS, 1927

EPICUREAN, 1941

SHRIMP, 1951

SHRIMP, 1951



SHELL, 1970

SPECIAL, 1971

SPHERE, 1981

PACIFIC, 1982/83

CASCADE, 1983