



keeping it cool

Joseph Paul D'Urso, a 1965 Pratt Institute graduate and 1986 *Interior Design* Hall of Fame inductee, began his career as a protégé of Ward Bennett, the doyen of total design. Still working today, D'Urso has rightly been considered the most sophisticated and lyrical minimalist interior designer of the past half century yet one whose body of residential and commercial work defies easy categorization. His hard-edge early masterworks—the Calvin Klein menswear showroom in New York and a series of mid-1970s apartments, including the ultra-sleek Reed Evins studio that scored him an *Interior Design* cover—both pioneered and transcended the high-tech vocabulary. In retrospect, those were strong, uncompromisingly purist statements, even to D'Urso. With further studies in England and travels across the globe, his work became warmer and more idiomatic. (For a fine assessment of D'Urso mid-career, see *Design Quarterly* 124 from 1984, an issue devoted entirely to his oeuvre.)

The spare, abstract beauty of D'Urso interiors bespeaks an underlying order and serenity as well as a potential energy. Both repose and motion are integral. Pivoting walls, seating platforms with pillows, and low tables on casters facilitate mutability and suggest a relaxed ease of living. So, too, does the furniture D'Urso designed for Knoll: the iconic rolling tables of 1980 and the more recent swivel lounge chairs. All point to the centrality of the client in D'Urso's design calculus. His projects are never preconceived and often unfold organically over time, providing keenly edited stage sets for the drama of everyday life. ↪



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: ERIC PRASECKI/OTTO. COURTESY OF WRIGHT. COURTESY OF KNOLL. COURTESY OF JANNIE MICHAELS. COURTESY OF KNOLL (2).



Clockwise from top right: Armchair prototypes, circa 1980. D'Urso high table for Knoll, 1980. Joseph D'Urso reposes in the featured East Hampton, New York, house, 1972. The designer today. D'Urso swivel chairs for Knoll, 2008. Reed Evins apartment, New York, 1976. The Simons duplex, New York, designed in 1976—and still extant today. Barry Schwartz house, mid-1970s. West Village townhouse, New York, 2013.

ETC.



CLOCKWISE FROM BOTTOM: PETER AARON/OTTO. JOSHUA MICHUGH. PETER AARON/OTTO.

