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by Jerry Berrios



#### Old becomes new in furniture showroom

Landscape designer Sean Knibb takes an unconventional approach to conventional design as he transforms ordinary outdoor spaces into magical retreats from everyday life.

Wrapped in chic, cushioned slipcovers, rough bales of hay become comfortable ottomans for outdoor seating areas. Underground gas lines feed hidden nubs, sending flames dancing atop gravel in the middle of an inviting garden. And concrete pavers and hearty plants transform a small urban courtyard into a lush hideaway.

"Designing gardens allows me to be extremely creative and work with something that's always changing," Knibb says. "A garden has to have a synchronicity and rhythm. What it takes to achieve that is difficult to define, but it's always my goal. I'm always looking for new elements, and turning old into new to find my rhythm."

That same philosophy infuses Knibb's debut line of indoor-outdoor furniture, an eco-friendly collection of tables and benches made of wood salvaged from construction tear-downs around Los Angeles. Each piece is unique—hardwood planks set in metal frames in colors straight out of a child's first box of crayons.

"The wood is so old and so hard," Knibb says. "It is so perfect for outside. It is not going to move, twist or bend."



The collection of sustainable designs was unveiled at 1524, the showroom Knibb opened recently in a converted bungalow next to his eponymous design studio. Named for its street address on Venice's trendy Abbot Kinney Boulevard, the austere showroom also carries elegant lighting fixtures designed by Peter Carlson, founder of CL Sterling & Son.

Like Knibb's furniture, Carlson's Rock Crystal collection of chandeliers, sconces and lamps is made from recycled materials -remnants of lead crystal found at the bottom of glass factory kilns in Portugal. "It's the same aesthetic with an interesting material," says Carlson, whose creations range from \$700 to \$8,000.

While Knibb is expanding his creative horizons, he hasn't abandoned his love of landscaping design. The grandson of florist Marian Cohen, Knibb grew up working in her floral studio in Montego Bay, Jamaica. He opened Knibb Design in 1993, and through his lush and elegant landscapes built a clientele that includes celebrities Cameron Diaz, Halle Berry and Jennifer Lopez.

Dwight Stuart Jr., of Beverly Hills is among those who now relish the outdoor sanctuary created by Knibb's imagination. "I like tucked-away areas of a garden that reveal themselves," Stuart says. "We call them sweet spots."



Some of the elements of these lavish designs are on display in a modular garden that Knibb created outside of the 1524 showroom. Based on various templates and sold by the square foot, the elements allow Knibb to transform an ordinary yard into an urban oasis in about six weeks.

**Resource:**

- 1524  
1524 Abbot Kinney  
Blvd., Venice  
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[knibbdesign.com](http://knibbdesign.com)