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GOOD VIBES
DJ superstar
DIPLO's
Jamaican retreat

CAMERA READY
Paris prepares
for the Olympics

CREATIVES
AT HOME
top designers open their doors

DISCOVERIES



1. HARVEY PROPPER'S 1972 DEEP TUFT MODULAR SECTIONAL, NOW REISSUED BY RH MODERN. 2. THE DESIGNER IN 1946. 3-4. CUBO RAKED MODULAR SECTIONAL AND MAYAN SOFA, BOTH FROM RH MODERN.



REBOOT

Gather Around

Revived by RH, *Harvey Propper's* modular seating innovates anew

When Harvey Propper began designing furniture in the late 1930s, at just 16 years old, a sofa tended to look a particular way, with two arms, a back, and a fixed configuration. But the Brooklyn-born designer questioned that convention.

Inspired by the rectilinear buildings of Catalan architect Josep Lluís Sert and abstract paintings by the likes of Pablo Picasso and Fernand Léger, he began experimenting with modular seating systems that allowed for a range of layouts. "The key to salvation was in bits and pieces of plane geometry," Propper mused. "They were meaningless alone, but when fused to conventional shapes, profoundly altered their character."

Today, three of his groundbreaking designs have returned to the retail market thanks to RH, the present-day arbiter of sectional style. The 1972 Deep Tuft series exudes groovy vibes, with sumptuous cushions (imagine a package of dinner rolls) stuffed into a polished-stainless-steel base. Meanwhile, the Cubo Raked, which debuted two years later, is block-shaped and clean-lined. And the sculptural 1983 Mayan Sofa underscores Propper's continued defiance of expectations.

"He was taking shapes and combining them in different ways, odder ways; it wasn't always symmetrical," the

designer's son Jory explains of his concepts, which offered, among other things, clever ways to assemble around the televisions that had infiltrated postwar living rooms. "He might remove an arm or part of the back of a sofa, creating these interesting configurations."

After Propper's factory in Fall River, Massachusetts, closed in 1986, ceasing production on his designs, vintage models and homages in their spirit steadily seeped into the market. But since 2013 his estate, run by his four sons, has collaborated closely with furniture distributor M2L to launch vetted reproductions on par with the real deals. Re-creating the Deep Tuft and Cubo Raked molds from surviving examples, M2L streamlined the bases (available in brass, bronze, and polished-stainless-steel finishes) and RH updated the density of the foam, which is now poured in Italy. The new editions, part of the RH Modern line, maintain the comfort of the originals. Take it from Jory, who still lives with original Cubo sofas (a predecessor of the Cubo Raked). As his dad once said: "Design has a fourth dimension—the intangible quality of aging gracefully." *rh.com* —HANNAH MARTIN