



Lighting designer Robert Sonneman in the 1960s.

RH Modern has reissued Sonneman's Constructivist Panel (left) and Cathedral lights in brass.



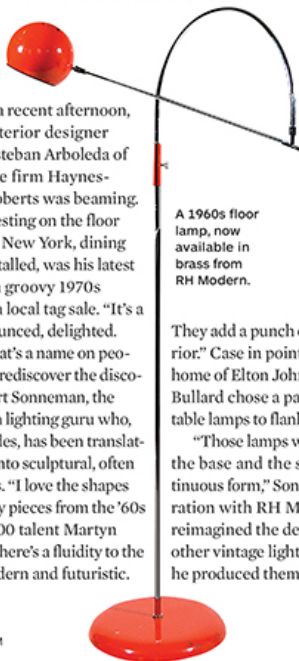
DISCO FEVER

Sleek, sculptural, and undeniably sexy, the 1970s works of lighting designer Robert Sonneman are turning heads once again

On a recent afternoon, interior designer Esteban Arboleda of the firm Haynes-Roberts was beaming. Resting on the floor of his Shelter Island, New York, dining room, ready to be installed, was his latest vintage purchase—a groovy 1970s chandelier found at a local tag sale. “It’s a Sonneman!” he announced, delighted.

More and more that’s a name on people’s lips as aesthetes rediscover the disco-era creations of Robert Sonneman, the 73-year-old American lighting guru who, for the past five decades, has been translating a Bauhaus ethos into sculptural, often experimental fixtures. “I love the shapes of his lights, especially pieces from the ‘60s and ‘70s,” notes AD100 talent Martyn Lawrence Bullard. “There’s a fluidity to the forms that’s both modern and futuristic.

A 1960s floor lamp, now available in brass from RH Modern.



A vintage Sonneman table lamp, bedside at the Beverly Hills home of Elton John.

They add a punch of glamour to any interior.” Case in point: For the Beverly Hills home of Elton John and David Furnish, Bullard chose a pair of Sonneman steel table lamps to flank the couple’s bed.

“Those lamps were an attempt to unify the base and the shade into one continuous form,” Sonneman says. In collaboration with RH Modern, he has now reimagined the design, along with ten other vintage lights, in brass. (Originally he produced them only in chrome or

steel.) “His designs represent some of the best work of the midcentury era,” reflects RH chairman and CEO Gary Friedman. For Sonneman the collection offers the chance for a wider audience to enjoy his old creations, though he admits he’s a bit surprised by the sudden interest. “I don’t normally look back,” says the designer, who continues to devise new fixtures for his namesake company. “I’m always thinking about what’s next.” rhmodern.com —SAM COCHRAN

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF ROBERT SONNEMAN; COURTESY OF RH MODERN (2); ROGER DAVIES; COURTESY OF 1STDIRTS