

# The Bishopric Agency

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**Adam Brown and Andrea Zemel launch ILIAD's Tenth Anniversary Year in New York with an entirely new, modernist ILIAD gallery at 212 East 57th Street that is a tour de force in decorative arts spanning more than 5000 years of human experience.**

**Monumental in scale and mission, the new gallery refashions the ILIAD business model to better reflect the specialties and interests of Brown and Zemel. “It gives us tremendous flexibility in orchestrating our unique artistic and curatorial expression.”**

**Long recognized as a premier source for period Austro-Hungarian Biedermeier Furniture, the new ILIAD “uses Modernism to weave together antiques, fine art, and antiquities that embraces our love of Biedermeier and Art Deco as well as ancient and contemporary decorative arts and design.”**

**NEW YORK Feb 24 – I L I A D...** Where classicism meets modernism. Their mission and their creed, the world according to Adam Brown and Andrea Zemel is one of epic journeys, transmigrating contexts, and bold tales to be told.

Taking the name of the definitive western tome, Adam & Andrea have gained their reputation over the last nine years as the Cecil B. Demilles of the antiques and fine art show circuit, wowing New York, Palm Beach, and San Francisco venues with their sweeping historical perspective, provocative period themes, and stunning aesthetic as Iliad Antik. Known as one of the world's premier purveyors of original Biedermeier and Art Deco design, their exhibitions are smartly woven narratives blending Greco-Roman and Asian antiquities with their own particular brand of cosmopolitan art and design. To the discerning client, the name is synonymous with sophisticated elegance, crisp modernist lines, and the “golden mean” of classicism. Iliad's signature standard presentation and their Prague restoration atelier and design studio are industry bywords. They were important contributors to America's first exhibition on the style in 2006 at the Milwaukee museum entitled “Biedermeier: The Invention of Simplicity” which traveled to Vienna and Berlin, and concluded at the Louvre in 2007. Today, Iliad is internationally

recognized by art advisors, architects, and top interior designers as an important source for the most coveted examples Vienna Biedermeier design and European mid 20<sup>th</sup> century furniture.

Celebrating their 10<sup>th</sup> year in the heart of New York's famed design district, after 20 months of setbacks and arduous construction, Iliad will finally re-open its doors one block from their former 58<sup>th</sup> street location to present their sensational new gallery at their fabulous new address... 212 East 57<sup>th</sup> Street. Located just east of Third avenue in a new luxury condominium high-rise, Iliad has expanded their physical presence with its new 5300 square foot space, and refashioned their business model to better reflect the specialties and interests of Brown and Zemel as their remarkable enterprise has grown over the past decade.

On their current mission in their spectacular new space, Adam and Andrea have achieved an ambitious vision – to present a tour de force in decorative arts spanning more than 5000 years of the human experience. The connective thread... the freshness and exuberance of modernism.

The expansive gallery more resembles a modern temple than an exhibition space with its monumental scale, imported Turkish limestone floors, and ethereal state of the art lighting. Upon entering the reception gallery from street level, the viewer is struck by a voluminous 50' exhibition hall flanked by 14' vertical light coves that draw the eyes upwards towards the main gallery portal. At the center of the main exhibition space, set atop a 25 foot open stair shaft, a kinetic LED color light source kindles the heart of the gallery's dramatic 5000 cubic foot well that frames the ultra modern glass, steel, and stone floating staircase leading to Iliad's lower gallery.

Brown says, "The space is architecturally unique, with powerful vertical elements and horizontal vistas. With each turn there is a surprise, with each closer look, some unexpected element." With their brilliant Architectural Designer Alex Fradkoff, Andrea and Adam were able to convey the true grandeur and scale of their gallery environment and bring a level of residential detailing to the design of commercial space seldom seen in a Manhattan gallery. "Alex pushed us to realize the verticality of the space and utilize the pre-existing architectural elements in bold new ways".

The lighting is dramatic and innovative, designed by Brown to provide the utmost flexibility for creating atmosphere, ambiance, and functionality. "When it comes right down to it, I'm a story teller. When I thought about lighting, I wanted to be

able to recreate the golden light of late afternoon in late summer - that ‘once upon a time light’ when the sun is low on the western horizon... the kind that lasts briefly but suffuses the senses with an otherworldly character.” “Our architectural light coves help achieve that effect. The LED perimeter lighting that we’ve incorporated into the design brings a kind of celestial quality to the ambient light spectrum, while providing us with the added ‘green’ fringe benefit of being one of the most luminous and cost effective light sources commercially available”.

Andrea is particularly excited about the scale of the new space, allowing Iliad to reinvent itself with its monumental proportions while still retaining more intimate areas in the lower gallery. “Two levels offer us a new flexibility for our curatorial and artistic expression. My life as an artist and designer can be perfectly merged with my experience as an antique dealer. Adam can emerge as the inventive storyteller who weaves together objects and images from various cultures and traditions.”

As a gallery owner, dealer, and curator, to Brown, what is most exciting about a particular piece from particular epoch is the communication that can occur between the world of the senses and the world of ideals. As Brown puts it, “the ability of an object or genre to communicate the ‘spirit of the age’ through it’s material presence”. Brown adds, “Quintessence is exemplar and un-self conscious. It’s what a collector covets in an acquisition and what gives an object its aesthetic and cultural value.” Equating the quintessential with what was modern for it’s day, Brown continues, “Modernism is both an aspiration and an ideal, like the classical cannon, its vitality springs eternal in a fresh and self-possessed exuberance and naked elegance”. “Certain pieces evoke such a conversation, and those are the ones I look for”.

A Philadelphia born antiquarian and entrepreneur, Iliad’s co-founder Adam Brown’s interests run deep. His love of art and design is second only to his lifelong pursuit of the arcane. An ardent student and admirer of Aegean and Eastern Mediterranean civilization, his ongoing study of Bronze Age myth and cult and Greek mystery religion contribute to the diverse milieu of ideas in Iliad’s eccentric and imaginative repertoire. He holds a degree in Asian Studies from Temple University where he focused on Buddhist philosophy and Japanese language studies.

Born in Washington D.C., spouse, partner, and co-founder Andrea Zemel is a studio artist who received her BFA from the University of Pennsylvania in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts. She later completed her

MFA in 1991 at Penn's Graduate School of Fine Arts, studying painting under Neil Welliver and printmaking with Hitoshi Nakazato. Welliver's realist formalism and Nakazato's minimal conceptualism both had an impact on her thinking. She later spent three years on the faculty at Penn, having launched a collaborative and public art program that continues to this day. Regardless of medium, Zemel's work maintains a concern for detail while giving authority to the physical material. A deep interest in psychoanalysis and hermeneutics informs her work, which contains both narrative and conceptual elements.

Andrea left academia to join Adam on his adventures and business forays in Eastern Europe in 1997. In Prague they became enamored with the Biedermeier style and formed a network of strategic alliances in the art and antiques field in the Czech Republic. In Budapest, they became captivated with the Hungarian Modern art movement of the inter-war period and their passion soon grew to include a considerable knowledge of 20<sup>th</sup> century Hungarian Art and their evocative collection of modernist works they today present at Iliad. After a brief stint in Philadelphia as I. Brewster & Brown, with their cadre of Czech affiliates, they opened Iliad Antik, New York in 2000. Soon later, in response to client demand, Zemel launched Iliad Design LLC to create high-end, one of a kind, period inspired commissioned furnishings at her workshop in Prague.

Iliad will present a series of curated shows throughout the year in one of their three exhibition halls at 212. To commemorate the opening of their new gallery, Zemel is currently preparing a comprehensive exhibition of her own work spanning two decades entitled: PATHOS, HUBRIS, & ZOE, to be presented at Iliad's lower gallery in May.