

Playful Pieces

"Every piece has its own story," says furniture designer Elizabeth Garouste of her whimsical creations. Her aim is to create an "atmosphere that is fantastical and dreamy." She adds, "We are surrounded by high tech, and I desire to pull us out of that."

The Gaby Cabinet, made of black patinated iron and gilded iron with gold leaf and ceramic elements, is a perfect example of her artistic sensibility. It's grand, yet not imposing, infusing its environs with a sense of playfulness. The cabinet's unconventional shapes and unusual mix of materials showcase Garouste's signature style.

Born in Paris in 1946 to Russian immigrants Salomon and Blima Rochline, who owned Tilbury, the fashionable shoe manufacturer, Garouste was raised in the French capital and surrounded by creatives her entire life. Educated at Paris's Académie Charpentier, Garouste went on to study interior design at the École Camondo, also in Paris, where she met her future husband, artist Gérard Garouste. As a young woman, she worked for nearly a decade at Tilbury, where she designed footwear.

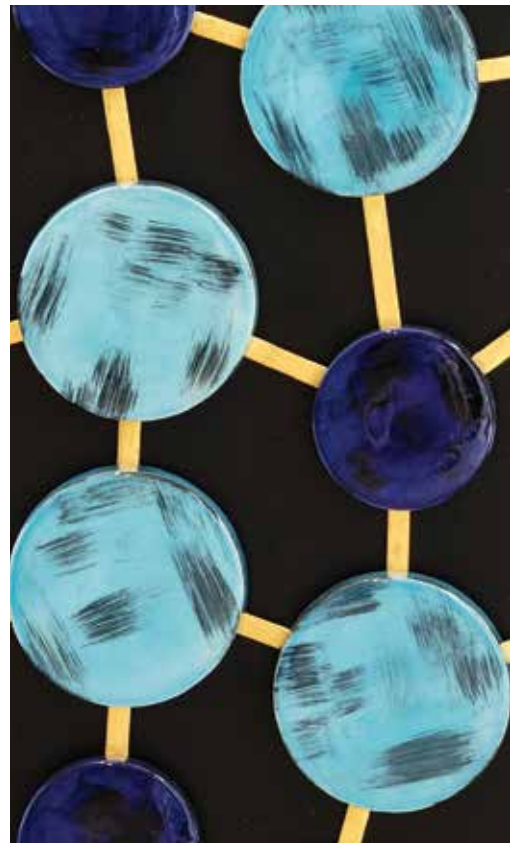
While pursuing her studies, Garouste cultivated a group of artists and designers as friends that included the architect and designer Philippe Starck. At Tilbury, Garouste also began designing theater sets and costumes for her friend the playwright and director Jean-Michel Ribes, work which clearly informed her artistic aesthetic.

In the late 1970s, Garouste met fellow designer Mattia Bonetti, and by 1980 the two were collaborating on furniture collections. The duo's designs quickly became some of the most sought-after pieces; their innovative creations have been displayed in collections of international importance, including the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Centre Georges Pompidou. For their achievements in design, Garouste and Bonetti were awarded the Prix Créateurs at the Salon International du Meuble in Paris.

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In the early 2000s, Garouste began displaying on her own and had her first solo exhibition at Ralph Pucci International in 2014. The Gaby Cabinet is on display at Pucci's New York City gallery.



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