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DESIGN CULTURE NOW

DONALD ALBRECHT | ELLEN LUPTON | STEVEN SKOV HOLT

BORIS BALLY B.1961

Providence, Rhode Island

Trained as a metalsmith, the son of an artist and an industrial designer, Boris Bally combines found industrial objects with elegant craftsmanship to create container-like constructions that are like nothing else in the design world today. His highly crafted bowls are formed from RECLAIMED materials like traffic signs and bottle caps. Working with a goldsmith's sensibility for material transition and detail, Bally hammers the basest of materials with the same care normally reserved for sheets of precious metal.

Recently, Bally began integrating industrial production methods with hand craftsmanship. By mixing processes such as hydraulic pressing, lathe turning, and press-die forming with hand-raising, riveting, and planishing, he formed a hybrid approach that synthesizes traditional craft and contemporary design thinking.

Bally applies these techniques to what he describes as "raw American culture." Bally believes that "garbage" is simply a resource we have yet to figure out how to use. His sampling of highway culture introduces the possibility for accidental amplitude: symbols and partial words peer out startlingly and engagingly.

In some of his bowls, Bally has reclaimed thrown-away bottle caps collected from friends, family, and colleagues. These become part of each bowl's narrative, and again reiterate Bally's commitment to taking objects that are no longer appreciated and re-animating them through the creative process. He has taken some of the most routinely authoritarian artifacts of our time—traffic signs with their relentless imperatives—and carefully refigured them to make us think as they make us smile. s.s.h.



DEFIANCE OF DIRECTION

Bowls, 1997, recycled traffic signage and brass rivets
Designer: Boris Bally
Hand-spinning: E. H. Schwab
Manufacturer: Boris Bally, Atelier



RECLAIMED



UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Bowls, 1996, recycled traffic signage and copper rivets
Designer: Boris Bally
Hand-spinning: E. H. Schwab
Manufacturer: Boris Bally, Atelier