

# AD

Exhibition

## A Little-Known Piece of Literary History Sparked the Idea for This New Exhibition

Charlap Hyman & Herrero have curated "For Mario," opening today at Tina Kim Gallery

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A look at "For Mario".  
Photo: Haik Studio

In the blurred landscape of current art and design, it's not unusual for a talented individual like Adam Charlap Hyman of [Charlap Hyman & Herrero](#) to dip his or her toe into curatorial waters. It's a departure for Charlap Hyman, one part of the [creative design firm](#) – but not a huge one. Previously, Charlap Hyman, who took the lead on this endeavor, curated a Miami-set group show. Many of Charlap Hyman & Herrero's works have also been debuted in the form of immersive installations (see, for example, [their grotto- and mirror-inspired endeavor](#) during this year's [Venice Biennale](#)). But this latest effort, which brings together various examples of modern and contemporary art and design, goes a step further – at least as far as those obsessed with interior design are concerned. White muslin – the type of which designers and laypeople

alike rightly associate with boarded-up homes and moving processes – drapes the majority of the pieces included.

Why? Not to make a statement about the importance of driving down the accumulation of dust. And not to say anything in particular about seasonally visited second homes. Charlap Hyman's choice instead comes down to his creative inspiration, which hinges upon a 1958 work by writer Mario Praz, *The House of Life*. Praz's work is autobiographical, and unique in its structure. Unusual at the time of its publication, the text focuses on Praz's description of all of the objects within his Rome-set apartment.

"It creates this monument to [Praz's] taste and everything about him," Charlap Hyman explains to AD PRO of his own homage, appropriately titled "For Mario." The exhibition, which opens today, is on view at Tina Kim Gallery in New York. "We've approached the curation a bit like the construction of a portrait," he adds – an analogy that echoes the show's artistic focus. Included are works by [Louise Bourgeois](#), [Milano Chow](#), [Pierre Jeanneret](#), and [Carlo Mollino](#), among others. Corralling such an assortment of works by creative greats can often prove to be a not insignificant headache. But when asked whether there were any challenges that came up along the way, Charlap Hyman replies with audible happiness, "Honestly. . . It was total bliss to work on the show." (Striking a balance of works from such different artists, designers, and years was complicated, he adds, but in an exciting way.)



Another look at "For Mario".  
Photo: Haik Studio

Nevertheless, for all of the interesting attributes within *The House of Life*, the book is not *that* widely known. Charlap Hyman came across it in college, at the RISD Library. The tome, he

recalls, was referenced in an article he read on [Yves Saint Laurent](#)'s collecting. "It was a nice crystallization of things I was talking about then," he says, citing the mere act of possession and the arrangement of objects as examples.

Clearly, it still is a relevant touchstone for him. Charlap Hyman's exhibition is loosely arranged in a manner that hints at separate rooms. The use of white muslin fabric, he explains, has been incorporated for two key reasons. One, as a neoclassical gesture, and two, "as way to communicate a sense of a space in transition." In a sense too, *The House of Life* transformed literary culture in its own small but important way. Arguably the first anthropological look at interiors in modern western culture, it, Charlap Hyman says, examined interiors through a philosophical and even scientific lens. A footnote in the annals of design history, one could argue, as perhaps will be true of this exhibition one day.