

FRIEDMAN BENDA  
515 W 26TH STREET  
NEW YORK NY 10001

MICHAEL ANASTASSIADES  
UPBEAT  
NOV 10 – DEC 18 2021

**New York** – Friedman Benda is pleased to present *Upbeat*, Michael Anastassiades' debut solo-exhibition with the gallery and first solo show in the United States. A seminal figure in contemporary design, Anastassiades is internationally renowned for his precisely considered forms that delicately balance material and light.

To realize this ambitious body of work, Anastassiades intentionally divested his exploratory prototyping process of industrial fabrication methods. Instead, he consciously resolved to confine production within the studio walls. Localizing initial creation proved a revelatory turning point; marking a departure from the studio's signature, controlled materials, bamboo has been introduced as a core element.

"The project has been an exercise of negotiation with the variability of nature. To understand the material and establish certain constants on which I could build a rhythm. To embrace its peculiarities and accept its unpredictability", says Anastassiades.

Alongside the embrace of a novel material language, studio-focused construction prompted the adoption of hand-made methodologies, directing Anastassiades to techniques rooted in centuries-old Japanese craft traditions. A further determined shift in approach sees the matter-of-fact constituents of each piece exposed – revealing their workings rather than disavowing their existence as components.

Arranged into striking linear configurations that take inspiration from the Manhattan skyline and knowingly refer to Dan Flavin's groundbreaking *Tatlin* series, the pieces in *Upbeat* adroitly interweave geographies and temporalities, as well as Eastern and Western art historical canons. Via the aggregate of their tangible and ideological parts, Anastassiades' pieces at once compress and expand temporal and physical space, distilling these pluralistic dimensions into a poised singular moment.

Concurrently with this exhibition, the ICA Milan is presenting Anastassiades' work in the exhibition, *Cheerfully Optimistic About the Future*, which opened on Sep 8, 2021.

#### **About Michael Anastassiades**

Michael Anastassiades was born in 1968 in Cyprus and currently lives in London. Trained as a civil engineer at Imperial College of Science Technology and Medicine in London before taking a Master's degree in Industrial Design at the Royal College of Art. He found his London studio in 1994, followed by his brand in 2007 in order to broaden the availability of his signature designs. Anastassiades has collaborated with FLOS, Puiforcat, Lobmeyr, Herman Miller, Salvatori, Nilufar, and Svenskt Tenn and worked with architects, David Chipperfield and John Pawson.

#### **About Friedman Benda**

Friedman Benda identifies and advances key narratives that intersect contemporary design, craft, architecture, fine art, and cutting-edge technological research. The gallery promotes synthesis between leading creative thinkers and makers by creating opportunities to advance new connections within the global design community. Friedman Benda is committed to a critical view of design history. We aim to expand the design dialogue from its established sources, exploring perspectives that have previously been marginalized. Spanning five continents and four generations, Friedman Benda represents a roster of seminal established and emerging designers, as well as historically significant estates. Since 2007, the gallery's exhibitions, publications and collaborations with institutions have played a vital role in the development of the contemporary design market and scholarship. For further information please visit [www.friedmanbenda.com](http://www.friedmanbenda.com) and the gallery's Instagram [@friedman\\_benda](https://www.instagram.com/friedman_benda) and [YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC...).

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