



JULY 2018

MAKING POETIC

IN AN EFFORT TO TRAVEL DOWN HAWAII'S STEEP,

dare-to-ride-me swells, Tom Blake and the revered Hot Curl surfers revolutionized surfing in the late 1920s and '30s by hollowing out heavy, solid wood boards, reducing the weight by half. Blake also gave surfboards the ultimate pièce de résistance: the fin. With this, performance boards were born, and surfers were able to negotiate the ocean with greater finesse and confidence.

"You want a board that listens to your feet, goes fast when you ask it to, and never surprises you, except pleasantly," says William Finnegan, the author of Pulitzer Prize-winning *Barbarian Days: A Surfing Life*. Bill Hamilton, father to Laird Hamilton, surf legend, and veteran shaper, adds, "A good surfboard should feel effortless under your feet and become an extension of where you want to travel."

While Blake and his audacious sun-soaked crew might not have intended it, the surfboard itself has become an iconic piece of design... even for those of us who've never zipped into a wet suit. High performance has been met with high design as the sport's art and style have migrated indoors with one-of-a-kind surf statements from designers and artists. Many are wave-ready and made by renowned shapers, but others are indoors-only. The beautiful boards featured here are akin to the many experts riding big waves: Sometimes you play with them, and sometimes you just admire.



2 ZEN MASTER

If there is a point where mystic crystal revelations and go-with-it beach culture converge, it is the Sansui surfboard (\$9,900). Artist Tomoyuki Iwanami spent eight years in Tokyo, absorbing traditional Japanese artisan techniques that surface in his collection of art boards made exclusively for LA design showroom Leclairneur. Inspired by Zen gardens, the Sansui is handcrafted from resin and lacquered to resemble a watery reflection. It wears pure gold, draped like a posh coat over its five-foot, eight-inch frame. The artist's limited-edition creation gets deep, as it's compelled, says Iwanami, by "what we see in our surroundings, what we see in nature, what we see in ourselves." leclairneur.com

3 SURF SAFARI

If owning an Hermès saddle is the peak of refined equestrian style, then acquiring the French house's soon-to-be-introduced surfboard defines aquatic decadence. Created as a part of its Autumn/Winter 2018 collection, the Planche de Surf shortboard (price upon request) features a Savana Dance drawing by South African artist collective Ardmore. Billed as user-friendly, the board comes kitted out with a wax bearing a unique fragrance developed by the fashion house's perfume artistic director. The hull is made to measure to increase stability and agility, but this piece is perhaps better suited for a wall than water. hermes.com