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## Art & Architecture

Carbondale founder and A&D Trophy Awards 2015  
judge Eric Carlson talks about Longchamp's  
New Bond Street boutique

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## A FUSION OF ARCHITECTURE & ART

Text: Suzanne Miao Photography: Courtesy of Carbondale

Luxury brand Longchamp recently unveiled its new showroom on New Bond Street in London, the latest in its series of 'Art & Architecture' collaborations led by Carbondale founder Eric Carlson, one of the A&D Trophy Awards judges this year

Carbondale founder Eric Carlson — who co-founded and directed the Louis Vuitton architecture department, and has also collaborated with the architecture offices of Rem Koolhaas, Oscar Tusquets, and Mark Mack — has, it must be said, an impeccable pedigree. Hong Kongers are familiar with his work, seen at the two Longchamp boutiques in the territory: one in the business hub of Central, and the other in high-end shopper paradise that is Canton Road, Tsimshatsui.

Returning as a judge for *Perspective's* A&D Trophy Awards this year (the last time he adjudicated, they were still called the Perspective Awards, back in 2012), Carlson has brought to fruition countless projects across the globe from museums, office headquarters, private residences, and of course flagship stores for the world's pre-eminent brands.

These include the Champs Elysees Maison for Louis Vuitton in Paris, the headquarters for Escada in Munich, and flagships for Tag Heuer, Tiffany & Co, H. Stern, and most recently for Longchamp, on London's prestigious New Bond Street.

The latest in a series of 'Art & Architecture' collaborations conducted by Carbondale, the unique approach coalesces artistic ideas with the architectural concepts to create an amalgamation with the brand image and a cohesive customer experience. For the New Bond Street project, New York-based artist Maya Hayuk was invited to introduce her palette of vibrant colours and intricately rich abstract patterns, woven together at an architectural scale, to the site.



Eric Carlson

“ We don't simply hang paintings on the walls and call it 'culture', we collaborate with the artists at the early design phase of a project to create unique works customised and integral to the architecture and the client or brand ”



**Above**  
A rainbow of Longchamp's iconic Pliage bags adorns the shelves, their colours reiterated in the monumental artwork created for the store by New York-based artist Maya Hayuk

**Facing page**  
Vibrant colours and intricately rich abstract patterns are woven together at an architectural scale along the stairwell of the Longchamp New Bond Street store





Inspired by Longchamp's signature Pliage folded bag, which has sold more than 16 million since 1993, Carbondale lined the 280 sq-m three-level boutique interior with architectural folding screens of embossed leather, engraved limestone, white lacquer, ebony, walnut and elm wood marquetry, each corresponding to the different product categories of leather goods, clothing and luggage. Each elongated floor culminates on Hayuk's 12m x 5m monumental kaleidoscope of diagonal layers of colours.

The mural, which lines the staircase that links each floor, remains distinctive as a work of art yet integrates into the spatial



**Clockwise from left**

Each of the London store's three floors culminates on artist Maya Hayuk's 12m x 5m artwork, a kaleidoscope of diagonal layers of colours • At Maison Longchamp in Tsimshatsui, Hong Kong, an art installation created by Eric Carlson lines the three-level circulation core with projecting vertical fins of multi-coloured translucent glass • Acclaimed Beijing artist Liu Wei created *Purple Air D No. 3*, with vertical pixels of vibrant and contrasting colours on canvas for Longchamp's La Maison 8 in Central, Hong Kong

experience of each level from near and far, while discreetly re-interpreting both the colour spectrum of the Pliage bag and Longchamp's traditional crisscross motif.

The artistic concept is an extension of a concept which can also be seen at the Maison Longchamp along Canton Road in Hong Kong. Here, Carbondale designed a three-storey façade of folded glass and engraved limestone as well as the 400 sq-m boutique interior, with an art installation by Carlson lining the three level circulation core with projecting vertical fins of multi-coloured translucent glass. The luminous bands of colour overlap and blend as visitors climb and descend the stairs.







Maya Hayuk's kaleidoscopic artwork is visible on every level of the store

At Longchamp's La Maison 8 along Queen's Road Central in the heart of the Central district in Hong Kong, an art installation called *Purple Air D No. 3* was created by acclaimed Beijing artist Liu Wei, who used vertical pixels of vibrant and contrasting colours on canvas. Also within the Queen's Road project is the Eiffel Mirror Room devised installation by Carlson, composed of a semi-circle of vertical mirrors reflecting a 180° progress of the Hong Kong visitor within the backdrop of the Eiffel Tower.

Carbondale's liaison with art and artists began at the Longchamp Madison Avenue New York project, when it collaborated with renowned Venezuelan optics artist and master Carlos Cruz-Diez. Cruz-Diez created a 6m-high installation named *Transchromie*, composed of transparent

sheets of intensely coloured acetate that rotate individually, continually melding to create new colours as they overlap. The diverse reiterations of verticality and spectrums of colour reflect the architecture, the emblematic Pliage bags and, finally, the energy and values of the brand.

Carbondale has collaborated with other artists in numerous projects, including Ubersee, James Turrell, Olafur Eliasson and Vanessa Beecroft, and featured pieces by Carlson himself. "We don't simply hang paintings on the walls and call it 'culture', we collaborate with the artists at the early design phase of a project to create unique works customised and integral to the architecture and the client or brand," he says. ●