



## Block Work

London-based Andy Martin, architect of the bentwood Thonet bicycle, makes things simultaneously baroque and minimal. Last September, Martin presented three colourful polyester-resin furniture pieces aptly titled *Blocks A/B/C*—a stool, side table, and coffee table, loosely abstracted and produced in a 26-piece series. Martin has played with resin and fibreglass since he shaped surfboards in his parents' garage at age 16, but *Blocks* evolved from scale architectural models cast in a silicone mould, and then milled and polished by hand. "The idea was to start the series with very simplistic forms, to focus on the material and its visual qualities," Martin says of his *Blocks*. **Shonquis Moreno**



## Rusticity Refined

Every month seems to bring a new restaurant to Vancouver, and although foodies can be a fickle bunch, the Homer St. Cafe and Bar (which opened in July of last year) is love at first bite. Classic comfort cooking is the direction executive chef Marc-André Choquette has taken with his newest venture, with a red rotisserie as the showpiece of the open kitchen. Chicken is the star here, served in quarter, half, or whole portions accompanied by peewee potatoes in chicken jus. On Sundays, the restaurant hosts a brunch with plenty of sweet and savoury selections, including a maple chicken cobbler and a decadent Nutella-and-banana sandwich. Dining at the Homer St. Cafe and Bar evokes French bistro with an added dash of Canuck panache—bon appétit. **Claudia Cusano**

## Embellished Instruments

For Graf von Faber-Castell, the luxury division of renowned German writing instrument company Faber-Castell, the advent of a new year signifies a new limited-edition pen. The 2014 collection drew creative inspiration from the baroque Catherine Palace located just outside of St. Petersburg. Last September, the palace's opulent Agate Pavilions were restored under the direction of master craftsman Boris Igdalov, from the precious stone detailing to the dark-red jasper embellishments. Igdalov was personally involved in this year's Graf von Faber-Castell design, and the collection includes rollerball editions, a platinum-plated pen, and an exquisite 24-karat gold-plated edition limited to only 150 rare pieces. **Katie Nanton**



## Ceramic Fortune

Wedge, roll, cut, shape, repeat. That's the mantra of Seattle-based artist-designer Aleksandra Pollner when she's forming porcelain fortune cookies before they are kiln-fired. The idea for these works of art was spurred into fruition when Pollner and a fellow artist were brainstorming an interactive art installation; the fortune cookie project was a fortuitous offshoot. Pollner's finished pieces—all unique—contain fortunes tucked within written by a fellow Seattleite, psychic Darleen Christopher. And contrary to some buyers' beliefs, Pollner does want her artworks to end up shattered post-purchase. As she puts it: "Seeing the beauty in the broken little pieces is an installation of its own." **Katie Nanton**

