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8.9.2006

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CONTEMPORARY FURNITURE

Cosmo combines wood, steel

Not satisfied to be known for its studio furniture combining unusual stone and wood, Napa's Chajo has moved into the realm of sculptural form with its latest line, **Cosmo**.

"We have been focusing on furniture design in a traditional sense although it's contemporary," designer Chanin Cook said. "Now we are trying to say this is furniture that makes a statement through its lines."

Cook and husband Jonathan Edie started their studio seven years ago after moving from Oakland, where the couple, who were high school friends in Pennsylvania, first developed a mutual interest in recycling and functional art.

Chajo has 16 collections of mostly tables, pedestals, consoles, and chairs that are distinguished by the legs. Stiletto mimics the archetypal stiletto heel, while the legs in the Bowed collection turn in at the base in a reference to animals.

The designers like to combine materials such as iron, wood, leather, fossilized limestone and petrified wood. Their Otto collection, released in 2002, features ottomans of bison hide with limestone tops quarried in the Green River area of northern Utah.

Now their first three Cosmo pieces — a bar stool, slab bench and small table — use Chechen wood harvested in Mexico and fossilized ammonite combined with bronzed steel to produce a more architectural look.

The Cosmo table (shown above right; \$6,500) is the signature piece of the line. It's 42 inches tall and has a 3-foot-diameter top. The slab bench (\$4,250) takes off on the theme with its slab made of California claro walnut in a natural shape.

Another variation, the bar stool (shown at right, \$2,200), stands 31 inches high and has a seat made of Italian bull hide, the only part not made by Chajo in the studio.

Cook said the Cosmo pieces



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"complement rather than compete" with other furniture, even in homes with mostly period pieces.

The curves in the Cosmo pieces derive from nature while reflecting the couple's design interpretation, Cook said. "We are doing that more and we're really jazzed about it."

Chajo will have a booth at the American Craft Council show this weekend at Fort Mason Center and at the Sausalito Art Festival over Labor Day Weekend. Their work is also shown at the Dovetail Collection in Healdsburg. For an appointment, call the studio in Napa at (707) 257-3676. www.chajo.com.

— Laura Thomas