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Todd Merrill Studio, Aloft at Bergdorf Goodman

The innovative and contemporary gallery is exhibiting several of its artists at the luxury emporium through early September.

By DAVID MOIN  MAY 18, 2023, 3:15PM



The Todd Merrill Studio exhibition at Bergdorf Goodman.

At the Todd Merrill Studio, the *modus operandi* is definitive.

It's "by the maker's hands," said Todd Merrill, owner of his namesake gallery. "We prefer to have everything we show to be made or very closely overseen by the actual maker who has a specific talent for ceramics, glass, painting and furniture. It's all handcrafted."

Collectively speaking, the 40 artists shown at the high-end and innovative Todd Merrill Studio, in Merrill's words, "create a space between art and design, bringing traditional craft elements to a very high production level. They're not limited to the use of traditional materials like wood, glass or ceramics. We do favor much of that, but we're also using all kinds of new materials like resins and polymers, and then going back and using metals, wood, ceramics and glass in new ways."

Todd Merrill Studio operates two galleries, on Lafayette Street in Manhattan and on a seasonal basis in Southampton, New York, but currently, there's also a collection of colorful, contemporary furniture, lighting, decorative pieces and art curated from the gallery — 110 pieces in all — on display at [Bergdorf Goodman](#) through early September. The gallery has taken over the 1,000-square-foot "Loft" space within the 18,000-square-foot seventh level home floor of Bergdorf's.

The space, with its 20-foot-high ceiling, huge skylight and rotating presentations every three or four months, stands apart from the 200-to-300-square-foot shops that line the narrow corridors of the seventh floor.

Seated on a tufted sofa in mauve velvet Dedar fabric, Merrill said, "Even our upholstered furniture, which is designed by me, is made in a workshop by craftspeople we've worked with for 20 years."

His association with Bergdorf's began a couple of years ago when the store began successfully selling a few pieces from his gallery, warranting a greater presence in the store. Among the early bestsellers: vases by Dutch artist Maarten Vrolijk, who is known for his glass vessels with their outgrowth of colored fragments. To make them, a meticulously patterned bed of broken glass pieces are strategically laid down and heated to be fused to a nascent blown-glass form. "It's an incredibly difficult process," said Merrill.

For Bergdorf's, Merrill custom-produced several items, including handblown glass sconces by Jamie Harris, [Christopher Russell ceramics](#), and some Merrill-designed furniture, considering the items would work into The Loft space and appeal to Bergdorf's affluent customers, and the prices they're accustomed to.

He suggested that Todd Merrill Studio's orientation is right for the times. "Luxury is really geared towards home right now, and at the very highest end, what I call high craft, things are being made by hand because people want to invest in something that's different than what other people have and isn't replicated 10 times in a mold. If you have extra money, you're spending it on home and design right now — maybe even more than on fashion and beauty."