

### 3 EXHIBITIONS TO SEE THIS MONTH



**1** The Hayward Gallery's **The New Décor** brings together over 30 international artists who've transformed domestic objects into installations. Exhibits include the 'On the Other Hand' clock (pictured) by Indian trio Raqs Media Collective and a loopy bed by Cuban artists Los Carpinteros inspired by an LA freeway. Until Sept 5 ([southbankcentre.co.uk](http://southbankcentre.co.uk)).



**2** Lighten your mood at **Rude Britannia**, Tate Britain's new exhibition about humour in British art. On show are bawdy cartoons by Steve Bell and his 18th-century forerunner Thomas Rowlandson (pictured); saucy seaside postcards by Donald McGill; and a room curated by comedian Harry Hill, featuring the comic creations of Spike Milligan and David Shrigley. Until Sept 5 ([tate.org.uk](http://tate.org.uk)).



**3** The way that designers have transformed the taking of tea into an art form over the years is the subject of **Teatopia** at Sheffield's Millennium Gallery. Items on display range from a 19th-century Russian samovar to modern tea sets by Kaori Tatebayashi (pictured). Until Oct 24 ([museums-sheffield.org.uk](http://museums-sheffield.org.uk)).



Antonio Citterio's new 'Eileen' table for B&B Italia and 'Kelvin' energy-efficient desk light for Flos



10 MINUTES WITH...

## Antonio Citterio

*We talk to the prolific Italian talent about his hot new launches and the secrets of design genius*

**Tell us about your new designs.** Among the most recent is the ultra-energy-saving 'Kelvin' LED table light for Flos, and I've done a new version of my 'Eileen' table and console for B&B Italia with a glossy lacquered finish instead of wood. My designs are about slow evolution rather than dramatic changes, based on a long relationship with companies – I've worked with B&B Italia since the early 1970s. I'm concerned with a sensibility, not a set aesthetic. I'd sum up my style as 'spectacular normality' – everyday things that are nevertheless special. That's difficult to do well.

**What's coming up next?** I'm mainly an architect – design is actually only a small part of what I do. I'm currently creating several hotel interiors, including the Bulgari hotel in London, which opens in 2012, Milan's new Mandarin hotel, and hotels in Murano, Venice and St Petersburg.

**Where do you get inspiration?** Everywhere: inspiration isn't like waking up and getting an idea. It's about continuous influences rather than something that occurs in a flash. I think inspiration also comes from self-criticism – once you've created something, you step back and look at it, and that gives you ideas.

**What, for you, is the most important aspect of being a designer?** Curiosity!

Constantly observing, studying and learning from what you see. If you think you're a genius, you're finished. Self-satisfaction is the enemy of creativity.

**What's your house like?** I live in an apartment in Milan. It's got some of my furniture in it but also designs by others, including by my Californian wife, architect Terry Dwan. It's convenient as it's within walking distance of my office.

**What would your alternative career have been?** I don't think I could do anything else because from a very early age I was focused on being a designer like my father. I went to art school aged 13 and opened my studio at 20.

**Who is your design hero?** Charles Eames. I share his interest in technology. My design influences are American, not European. I'm a Modernist – functionalism is important to me. **If you only had ten minutes left on Earth, what would you do with them?** I'd sit in a chair and just be still. I would enjoy the moment as I believe nothing is eternal.

*B&B Italia ([london.bebitalia.com](http://london.bebitalia.com)); Flos ([flos.net](http://flos.net))*

### Precious metals

*Italian artist and jewellery designer Giorgio Vigna first came to our attention when he created a strikingly modern range of glass birds for Iittala in 2007. His second collection for the Finnish brand, which launches this summer, is no less covetable: a set of four aluminium storage boxes in super-shiny silver or black. Their organic shape was inspired by pebbles worn smooth by the sea – use them to house favourite keepsakes, or just as a beautiful flourish on a sideboard. From £79, Skandium ([skandium.com](http://skandium.com))*

