



Designer Shay Dahari on a sofa made from a crate thrown out by the military industries. (Nurit Shachar).

## One man's trash

Shay Dahari designs furniture made from materials he finds in dumps

■ BY ORLJ LENKINSKI

Two and a half years ago, Shay Dahari sold a coffee table he had fashioned out of a discarded gas tank.

"It was from a 1950s Reo truck," beams Dahari, a former teacher who is the driving force behind the furniture label Shaycle Design. "I found it in a dump, which was incredible. I knew right away what I would do

with it. It's a shame that I sold it; I would love to have that table for myself."

Dahari, 43, is a sturdy-looking man with close-cropped hair and well-worn hands. His rough and tough exterior is offset by a



A bureau made from an old table found in a dump and a shutter from a house before it was demolished (Tzili Agmon)



The designer next to a chest of drawers made from roofing material from the 1950s (Tzili Agmon)

mellow speaking voice.

"I'm a hugger," he says with a hint of a grin.

His regret about the Reo table is uncharacteristic, as Dahari is usually thrilled to part with his pieces.

"I hate seeing pieces sitting in the showroom. It's sad for me. They need to be out in the world, living their life," he says.

Perhaps the regret stems from the fact that the coffee table was the first piece of furniture Dahari ever sold, marking his arrival on the design scene.

His change of career from educator to recycling artist went hand in hand with his recovery from illness.

"I was very sick for a long time. I lost the ability to walk for over four months. When I got better, I found myself drawn to manual labor, to the kind of work that would connect me to the ground. I wanted to create something," he explains.

As a teacher, Dahari led workshops about environmental preservation.

"The connection between man and his surroundings has always interested me. The environmental agenda has been in my blood for as long as I can remember," he says.

It seemed a natural step, then, for Dahari's creations to be based on recycling. He has always been a fan of landfills and dumps, a real-life example of the expression "One man's trash is another man's treasure."

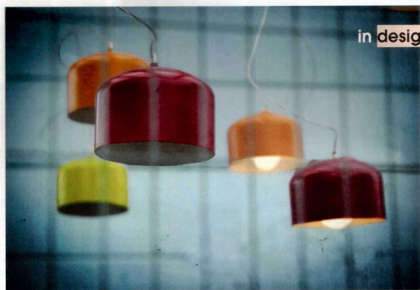
"A dump, to me, is heaven," he smiles. "It's unbelievable what people throw away."

Trolling through landfills is one of the key aspects of Dahari's creative life today.

"I find incredible things in dumps. Sometimes, I don't even know what their original use was, but you can see the design that went into the objects," he says.

While he knew what he wanted to do with the materials he found early on, Dahari had to quickly

bridge the gap between his vision and his



Lampshades made from discarded air-conditioner gas tanks. (Yariv Veinberg)

technical abilities. Thus Shaycle Design's journey has been filled to the brim with learning.

"I work all alone in my studio. I don't have anyone to watch or consult with. I am constantly learning. I believe that if you aren't learning, you aren't developing," he asserts.

Once word got out that Dahari had opened a design studio, his friends and family turned into clients.

"The first pieces I made were for friends, which was great because they were very demanding customers. They gave me a lot of feedback and even argued my prices down," he recounts.

In the 30-plus months since he opened his business, Dahari's clientele has grown via word of mouth alone. He has sold more than 100 pieces and recently released a line of light fixtures.

"I just finished a kitchen made entirely out of recycled wood," he says, showing pictures from his mobile phone. Custom-made bookshelves and cabinets are becoming one of Dahari's main endeavors.

"That kind of work is really about connecting with the client, about fulfilling their fantasy together. In the end, the piece of furniture encapsulates the experience that we underwent in making it together," he says.

Unlike many of his peers in the business, Dahari does not claim to be a refurbisher or renovator but an artist. His process is not about maintaining what once was. Rather, it is about giving new life to used objects.

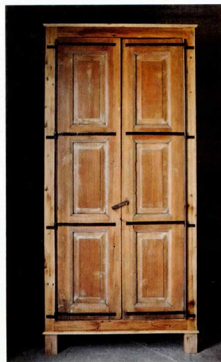
"I have been through a lot in my life. I think it's a quality I look for in people, that they've got a story to tell, that they've been through things. It's the same quality that I appreciate in the materials I use — that they have depth and have lived. Where one person would see damaged

goods, I see beauty. I bring these objects back to life," he says.

"My work is functional, but it is art," he elaborates. "I see a soul in my pieces. They can last a lifetime. They are strong and timeless."

Shaycle Design furniture pieces run between NIS 5,000 and NIS 15,000. Light fixtures cost NIS 590 each.

Items can be purchased at the Shaycle Design studio in Moshav Hayogev, near Afula, or on [www.market.marmelada.co.il](http://www.market.marmelada.co.il). For more information, visit [www.shaycle.com](http://www.shaycle.com). To schedule a visit, call Dahari at 054-656-5605.



Chest made from discarded wood and iron parts taken from a house before demolition (Tzili Agmon)