



Contact: Nancy Egan
646.536.7401
egan@newvoodou.com

VENU New York Showroom
212.982.3571
www.venu.com

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Gary Lee Launches New Furniture Line *VENU* New York showroom Grand Opening to introduce *La Collection Salon*

New York, January 27, 2006 — VENU, a furniture company founded by Gary Lee and Thomas McWalters of the design atelier, Gary Lee Partners, is opening the doors of its New York City showroom this coming month with an Opening on February 23, 2006. The New York showroom preview late last year drew a positive response from the local design community.

La Collection Salon offers seating, tables and case goods created to meet the designers' desire for sophisticated new classics that will enhance a variety of settings, both commercial and residential. Gary Lee, who heads both the design practice and the newly formed furniture company, says, "VENU evolved from our personal search for modern furniture with the timeless elegance of mid-century European and Asian profiles. The aesthetic is modern yet sensual, thoughtfully scaled, carefully detailed, and made of luxurious materials."

Nationally recognized for creating elegant and fine-tuned interiors, Gary Lee Partners has designed custom pieces for their corporate and residential clients for years. "With this line we wanted to achieve the same finesse that characterizes our design projects," explains Mr. McWalters, Managing Partner of Gary Lee Partners and Managing Director of VENU. The result is a sophisticated collection that crosses traditional categories and can be used in corporate, hospitality and residential environments with equal grace.

Drawing on their experience, Messrs. Lee and McWalters identified a small cadre of top-tier, regional artisans to manufacture the line. At a time when many design company are looking offshore to save on costs, VENU is working with manufacturers in Illinois, Michigan and New York to ensure quality. Mr. McWalters adds, "Being directly involved in the manufacturing process allows us to fully realize our design vision without compromise. Each piece is crafted to



order whether it is an individual piece for a residence or quantities of the same quality for a corporate installation.”

Under Mr. Lee’s direction, the design team, headed by Gina Goodkin, has developed a line that currently includes 23 individual pieces. Ms. Goodkin comments, “The power of our design process is that it allows us to evolve the collection. Whether we draw inspiration from a classic piece of furniture or create in response to a client’s vision we continually infuse the collection with beautiful, new, complementary pieces.” The signature quality of the collection is reflected in the use of high quality walnut and other hardwoods and wood veneers, handcrafted metal work and hand-rubbed finishes.

Christopher Hubbard has joined VENU as National Sales Director. “Christopher’s strong background in sales, marketing, and manufacturing with fast growing furniture companies is the perfect compliment to our experience as designers,” notes Mr. Lee. Mr. Hubbard concurs, “I have known and admired the work of Gary Lee Partners for a long time. Now I have an exceptional opportunity to help develop the new company as we introduce Venu to the marketplace.”

La Collection Salon is now on display at the VENU galleries at 417 Lafayette, 5th Floor, New York, NY and 360 West Superior, Chicago, IL. The collection is also available for viewing online at www.venu.com. If you cannot attend the Opening on February 23rd, please call 212.982.3571 to schedule a time to see the collection.

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