

Designer has artist's soul

By Jesma Magill

Renowned American furniture designer, Laura Kirar, was in Auckland recently to promote her extensive range of furniture designs through Auckland's Cavit & Co.

Speaking at a cocktail function hosted in her honour; she said she originally wanted to be a sculptor or a painter but a 'twist of fate' saw her digress.

Kirar attended the prestigious Museum School of the Art Institute of Chicago where she studied sculpture and interior architecture but one day, while working on a sculptural piece, she "accidentally created something functional." And that, she said, was the beginning of a very successful design career.

Multi-talented and inspired by many things around her, Kirar admitted she had always been interested in furniture manufacture and design.

After graduating from college in 1992, she began work with an emerging studio, Holly Hunt. She then moved to New York in 1995, where she worked on several high-end residential interior projects with Ralph Lauren Home and pursued product and furniture design as well.

In 1999, Kirar founded her own company TRU Partners INC, where her first hospitality project was for Fressen Restaurant, one



An artist at heart and an accomplished and inspired designer, Laura Kirar creates sculptural objects that are also beautifully functional.

Photo supplied

of the original venues to establish in the former derelict Meat Packing District on Manhattan's West Side.

This district is now a thriving, sophisticated dining and entertainment destination and the Fressen project launched Kirar's first licensing partnership for her custom-designed furniture range.

She was also involved with the

global rebranding of the Westin Hotels with her tapware designs through Kallista, which led to her partnership with Kohler, the largest plumbing company in the world.

In 2003 she was recognised as one of "America's Top Young Designers", by House Beautiful.

"My interiors are more curated than designed," she explained. "As

pieces are selected, the interior unfolds to reflect the shared vision of me and my client. Inspiration is born from my experiences travelling, my love of collecting and my passion for art.

"I believe in the importance of life's simple joys: art, nature, music, books and in particular, the compelling interaction between people and places."