

Greta M. Grossman



Designer Portrait

GUBI

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Greta M. Grossman (1906-1999) maintained a prolific forty-year career on two continents: Europe and North America and operated as mover and shaker in the male dominated world of mid-century modern design. Her achievements were many and encompassed industrial design, interior design and architecture. In 1933, having successfully completed her fellowship at the renowned Stockholm arts institution, Konstfack, she opened Studio, a combined store and workshop in Stockholm. During the same year Greta M. Grossman married jazz musician, Billy Grossman with whom she later emigrated to the United States, settling in Los Angeles.

Upon their arrival in California in 1940, Grossman opened a well publicized shop on Rodeo Drive, where she was among the first to bring the Scandinavian modern aesthetic to southern California's burgeoning modernist scene. Her unique approach to Swedish modernism was an instant hit in Los Angeles and soon she attracted celebrity clients, including Greta Garbo, Ingrid Bergman, Joan Fontaine, Gracie Allen and Frank Sinatra and it was not long before she began appearing alongside the likes of Charles Eames and Isamu Noguchi.

While Grossman is the architect behind more than 15 homes spanning the globe from California to Sweden, she is most noted for her industrial designs where the Gräshoppa Floor Lamp and Cobra Table Lamp belongs to the most famous works.

Through the 1940's and 50's Grossman exhibited her designs at museums worldwide, including MoMA in New York and The National Museum in Stockholm. Yet inexplicably, following her retirement in the late 1960's Grossman's name all but disappeared from the design landscape.

"The fact that she is relatively unknown just makes the process for GUBI more interesting, as we have an honest opportunity to continue to convey Greta M. Grossman's designs. Grossman was known in her time in both Sweden and California, USA. However, she ended up largely unknown and almost forgotten. I am very happy that we can give this magnificent female designer a second comeback." - Jacob Gubi