

**No. 12: Desk drawer**

The death of my niece, Kelly Michelle Crowder Davis, on October 23, 2006, had a profound effect on me; she was just 27 years of age. She began using Meth after her husband died 2½ years earlier. Their last day together was Valentine’s Day. By coincidence, the deadline to submit this drawer for selection was exactly 4 years from the date of his death.

As the anniversary of Kelly’s death approached, I found the perfect opportunity to distract myself; instead of focusing on the loss, I shopped for a new home. This drawer was part of a small desk that was left in the garage of the house that I purchased. It seemed destined for this project.

I don’t visit the cemetery where my niece was buried. I cannot connect that place with her. Since she has inspired me, I find it more appropriate to visit something that has been created in part from that inspiration.

–*Vonnie Crooks Cline (Kennesaw, Georgia)*

**No. 13: End table drawer**

Please see No. 2 for statement.

**No. 14: Typesetting drawer**

Our father, typographer Charles F. Robertson, founded the Tinhorn Press in 1956 shortly after graduating from the Atlanta Art Institute. Known for his wit and exacting craft—each lead font thrown letter by letter onto the jobstick, proofed and re-proofed, type “kissing” the page—he pursued this fifteenth-century art form through the twentieth century. Printing long into the night, the press in the basement would lull us to sleep: badoomboomp (pause) spin spin spin, badoomboomp (pause) spin spin spin. . . .

–*Frances Francis (Atlanta, Georgia), Julia R. Padgham (Gainesville, Georgia), and Charles Y. Robertson (Savannah, Georgia)*

**No. 15: End table drawer**

This drawer comes from an antique-style *Dressoir* end table made last year by the Dutch design company Studio JSPR as part of their *Plastic Fantastic* furniture line. It has been “renewed” by the addition of a rubberized finish over the wood surface, creating a new aesthetic. Tejo Remy’s Chest of Drawers is composed of recycled drawers; with its inclusion in this important piece of design for the High Museum, the *Dressoir* drawer has now been twice recycled. –*Scott Reilly (Atlanta, Georgia)*

**No. 16: Baby changing table drawer**

*A Drawer for Emily*

Emily’s drawer is full of loving memories of times spent with family and friends planning for her birth, sharing stories and excitement about our growing family. The lilac drawer comes from a changing table my wife

Katherine and I selected for our first child’s nursery; the piece was a gift from my mom and part of a custom-painted collection that also includes a white bookcase and sea-grass crib. It has special meaning to us because we wanted the furniture for our daughter to reflect our shared love of nature and to give the room a unique feel. Now, as the drawer finds a new home at the High, it leaves a space full of possibilities and family memories yet to come. –*John Federovitch (Johns Creek, Georgia)*

**No. 17: Table drawer**

This drawer has significant connections with the history of Atlanta. It comes from a table owned by Judge Elbert Parr Tuttle, which I acquired from his estate in 1996. During the heart of the U.S. civil rights movement, Tuttle was Chief Judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. At the time, this circuit encompassed six states of the former confederacy. Tuttle and his colleagues courageously enforced federal rulings that ended the legal racial segregation of Southern society. President Jimmy Carter awarded him with the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1981.

The inclusion of this drawer in the High Museum’s collection would be further fitting because Judge Tuttle (and the drawer) lived only a block down 16th Street from the High. –*Ben Johnson (Atlanta, Georgia)*

**No. 18: Dresser drawer**

Please see No. 2 for statement.

**No. 19: Desk drawer**

Please see No. 2 for statement.

**No. 20: Chest drawer**

This drawer came from the Mills family beach house on Amelia Island. It was found by my mother, Alice Mills, roughly 25 years ago. An old beach drawer, worn, well-used, neglected, and left to be discarded, but now its usefulness will be restored. The top drawer of four, it served the old beach house well; having a place in one of the bedrooms to hold the owner’s or a visiting vacationer’s belongings. Needed no more in the house, it was assigned to the garage on fishing duty. It held lures, nets, hooks, reels, tools, and all of the necessary items to insure that fish would be on the table for supper. Made of wood, it measures seven inches tall, twenty-seven and one-half inches wide, and fifteen and one-fourth inches from front to back. –*Emma Bledsoe (Fernandina Beach, Florida)*

**You Can’t Lay Down Your Memory Chest of Drawers**, designed 1991, made 2008, maple, various pre-existing drawers, furniture-mover’s strap of jute and metal; edition 101/200, Tejo Remy (Dutch, born 1960), designer, purchase with funds from the Friends of the Decorative Arts, 163.2007

# A Closer Look

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HIGH MUSEUM OF ART ATLANTA



## Tejo Remy, *You Can't Lay Down Your Memory Chest of Drawers*

This special commission by the High was created using drawers donated by residents of Atlanta and the Southeast. From a region-wide call for submissions, designer Tejo Remy selected twenty drawers for inclusion in the final work. The following statements are in keeping with the designer’s concept that objects hold memories for their owners. Please enjoy the stories of these drawers as you look for each one’s location in the chest.



**No. 1: Jewelry box drawer**

My drawer is one of five drawers in a jewelry box given to me by my father when I was a young child. My father is now in a nursing home in North Carolina battling Alzheimer’s disease. He doesn’t remember my name, but he remembers certain treasures from my childhood. This drawer reminds me of a time when my father was active and strong, and very much a part of my life.

Both the interior and exterior are unique. The drawer is made of wood. The handle is a brass moth with delicate detail. The color is a deep mahogany. The drawer is glued: no tacks, no nails, no braces.

–Cathy Clements (Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 2: Desktop organizer drawer**

Several drawers were submitted by The Salvation Army Thrift Store on Marietta Street. No one understands the idea of recycling and reuse better than the people who work in a thrift store. You would be surprised by the sheer number of items that are donated to us, some in better condition than others. While these objects are no longer of any value to their previous owners, our stores help give perfectly usable things a second life and keep them out of the landfills a little longer. As they say, “One man’s junk is another man’s treasure.” We are pleased to participate in this project, which is very much in character for us—it’s what we do every day.

–Jeffrey Booker, Sterling Clay, and John Morgan (The Salvation Army Thrift Store, Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 3: Dresser drawer**

Please see No. 2 for statement.

**No. 4: End table drawer**

This 1962 blond furniture drawer has been in the Spinelli family home in Akron, Ohio, for 46 years. The drawer held poker chips and multiple decks of mismatched playing cards. When the legs gave out and the table finally collapsed, I could not dispose of this strong and sturdy drawer. It was my inspiration to use the drawer in my art room at Lassiter High School and fill it with important art supplies. Now I pass it along to the High Museum for a third life. –Suzette Spinelli (Marietta, Georgia)

**No. 5: Filing cabinet drawer**

When I set up my first office for Retromodern.com, a vintage filing cabinet containing this drawer was next to my desk. I used it as storage and fell in love with the color and the shape of the raised integrated handle. While the offices have changed and the business has grown, I have also kept this piece near where I work—I just have enjoyed looking at it. –Scott Reilly (Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 6: Filing cabinet drawer**

Through its years in a high school teacher’s classroom, a filing cabinet acquires multiple roles. Beyond lengthy tests, copious handouts, or musty manila file folders, teachers stash away a variety of idiosyncratic items. The Chapel Hill High School English Department’s filing cabinets contained the following and much more: confiscated dice and cards, baby lotion, half a pack of gum, hand sanitizer, floss, a salt shaker, deodorant, a Magic 8 ball, a bicycle horn, three-year-old popcorn, an egg timer, dried-out dry erase markers, a sewing kit for emergencies, a lint roller, bandages, and a rubber duck. Contributing the filing cabinet drawer is our homage to the quintessential piece of office furniture. –Chapel Hill High School Department of English (Douglasville, Georgia)

**No. 7: Portable typewriter**

Designed in 1969 by Ettore Sottsass, this portable typewriter came from the archives of my design store, Retromodern.com. The *Valentine*—with only its slipcover case and carrying handle visible—challenges us to re-think the concept of a “drawer,” a tribute of which I believe Sottsass would approve.

Sottsass greatly contributed to twentieth-century design, acting as a catalyst for re-defining objects from everyday life. He celebrated the ordinary, perfunctory action—in this instance, the act of typing—with his *Valentine* for the Olivetti office machine company. It is usually seen in red with its matching red case and seldom in gray. This submission is particularly poignant in light of Sottsass’s death last year. –Scott Reilly (Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 8: Music stand drawer**

This drawer holds special significance for my wife and me. It came in a used music stand we purchased twenty-

five years ago with the promise that someday I would buy her a piano to go with it. Last year for our 26th wedding anniversary, I bought her a used baby grand. We both agreed that it would be truly incredible to share this memory with the art world and that perhaps the love and joy it brought us could be felt through Tejo Remy’s sculpture.

The drawer itself has tremendous character with its hand-cut dove-tails, sensuous curved face, and solid brass antique drawer pulls. I don’t think I realized until just this moment how truly special this old drawer is.

–Ken VanDyne (Norris, Tennessee)

**No. 9: Desk drawer**

This drawer was made by my father, who recently lost a short, intense battle with cancer. For me, it symbolizes many of the qualities that I admired most about my dad: his love of nature, his incessant search for excellence, and his wicked sense of humor.

I took this drawer from a desk made out of materials my dad found on his family farm. Always seeking beauty and inspiration in nature, Dad turned interesting-looking branches and trees into tables, desks, and chairs. The use of local found materials makes this a very special piece of furniture, with figurative and literal roots in my family’s history.

This desk is also special to me because Dad let me help him build it. Protected under a layer of epoxy, the desk-top includes my watercolor drawings and photographs taken by my husband. I can think of no better way to commemorate my Dad’s life than to have a drawer that he made included in this project.

–Winter Benedict (Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 10: Chest drawer**

This plastic drawer came from a super-rational modular drawer system designed by Simon Fussel for the Kartell furniture company in 1974. It is literally called the *Stacking Drawer System*. Its objectification within the Chest of Drawers and inclusion as a non-like modular element delight me! –Scott Reilly (Atlanta, Georgia)

**No. 11: Card catalogue drawer**

Once again, I have made the resolution to clean out the basement. It is filled with stuff from my parents’ home and all the things our daughters left behind. When I read about your drawer project, I remembered an old card catalogue drawer. In 1995 while my daughter Brook Johnson Borden was attending Rice University, the library converted its card catalogue system to electronic files. The old drawers were offered to students as relics of the past. This is such an important historical piece in the computer age: future generations may never pull out a card catalogue drawer, find the correct reference card, and hunt down their book. This drawer deserves to have a spot in the Tejo Remy Chest of Drawers. –Kay Johnson (Atlanta, Georgia)