



There's something lizard brain about it; we have always gravitated towards shiny, luminous metal," says silversmith Heath Wagoner.

The Brooklyn-based creator of quirky barware and home accessories is far from surprised that silver, despite rising prices, has made a triumphant return to our homes in 2026. Italian homeware retailer Artemest saw sales of silver pieces rise by 89 per cent in the past year, while Laura Young, managing director of American design gallery The Future Perfect, reports "a noticeable increase in interest in silver as a finish and a material".

It's not Louis XIV-style candelabras and 84-piece cutlery sets that are back on the design agenda, but a new wave of modern heirlooms. Silvery metalwork is being reinvigorated by both heritage houses – take Puiforcat's new collaboration with London-based designer Tomás Alonso,

whose sleek, conical sake cups (from €800) hover above resin bases, and Georg Jensen's fluid stainless-steel range of Fold vases (from £79) – and individual makers,

such as Sheffield-based Japanese silversmith Shinta Nakajima, whose fruit bowls are sinuous and gravity-defying (POA from Gallery Fumi). They're crafting tableware but also more idiosyncratic items – from jeweller Sophie Buhai's cigarette holder wound with thorny vines (\$2,600) and Juju Vera's Greek-motif inspired cigarette case (\$995) to Zoë Mohm's vanity set for Jacqueline Sullivan Gallery (\$2,600). The coolly refined pillbox, hair comb and clothes pin are decorated with circles of Cambodian ironwood, speckled with silver, and can be strung together on a chain or cord.

"Objects of discussion and desire" is how Wagoner describes his designs. New additions include the Conserva Tin (\$1,000) and Sardine matchbox (\$525), which take their shape from humble Spanish fish tins. "I wanted to elevate this undervalued form and make it super-technical," says the jewellery designer. Buhai also arrived at silver as a means of sanctifying her most "mundane" essentials. Her precious gem-set, pyramid-shaped (\$3,200) and curved Nautilus boxes (from \$1,600), for instance, "came from me needing something to store my vitamins and my Xanax in – but that I could also pull out of an evening bag at a restaurant", she says. Her most extravagant everyday object is a silver toothpick in a hammered silver case (\$1,150) – the perfect piece to stash in a silver shell clutch bag from JW Anderson (£920).

The candleholder might be more standard fare for silversmiths, but it's still being intriguingly updated – as in Buhai's Four Eyes votives (from \$3,400) and Danish brand Corali's recycled-silver candelabrum (£680) with delicate twisted legs. Artist Kira Freije, nominated for this year's Turner Prize and showing her wares with JW Anderson, crafts her elaborate and sculptural candlesticks in stainless steel, but the interplay between soft light and silver tones is equally enchanting.

JESSICA AWARI-TEFE SILVER LILIAM SMOOTHIE BOWL, £3,700



HEATH WAGONER silver Sardine matchbox, from \$525, kdbiel.com



JUJU VERA silver Greco cigarette case, \$995

TREND

STERLING WORK

Small silvery treasures that are worth hunting out. By *Marion Willingham*

PHOTOGRAPHY BY **KAROLINA BURLIKOWSKA**
SET DESIGN BY **EVE ASAMI**



JW ANDERSON and KIRA FREJE stainless-steel candlesticks, £5,000



SOPHIE BUHAI silver Nautilus case, \$3,200

poppies, butterflies and bird's nests, inspired by the local Catskills landscape. He was introduced to the material by his father, a jeweller, but "making a ring is a nightmare". Instead, he makes silver talismans to decorate not only light fixtures but also tables and chests.

HISTORIC SILVERWARE STILL serves as a muse. "I'm passionate about paying homage to Scotland's rich silversmithing history while remaining playful," says Glasgow-based Monica Findlay. She draws on the silver collection of the National Museum of Scotland to produce homewares such as a minimal candle snuff with an oak handle (£780) and a smooth quatrefoil-shaped box (£5,200). At London's Goldsmiths' Fair last month, the Marchmont Silversmithing Workshop in the Scottish Borders highlighted the centuries-old technique of chasing and repoussé – used to create relief

"The reflective nature of silver makes it a natural choice for lighting," says Jonah Meyer, founder of Sawkille Co, whose Minnewaska range of sconces and chandeliers is adorned with

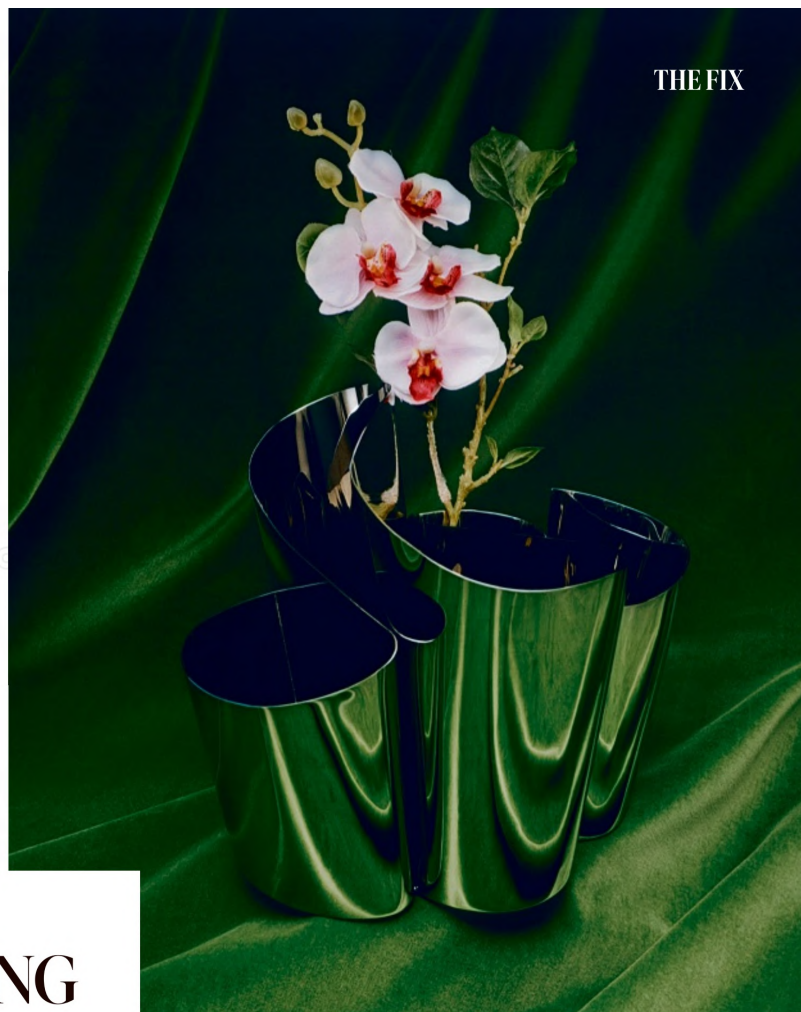
designs in sheet metal, and being made contemporary by a trio of the studio's creatives: Katie Watson, Iona Hall and Jessica Awari-Tefé. Meanwhile at PAD London (13 to 18 October), the silver selection includes a limited-edition collection of goblets created by Aleksandra Zawistowska and Lindsey Fontijn for Galerie Boketto, which combine Polish glassblowing with Dutch silversmithing.

"There are extraordinary traditions in metalwork," agrees Mia Gosset, a Belgian designer whose fans include Rick Owens and Lady Gaga. She looks to equestrian equipment, liturgical items and medieval chests in the design of her jewellery and objects in silver and bronze. "I've always been drawn to objects that open, unfold or articulate," she says, highlighting the bespoke metal-bound notebooks that are among her most popular pieces.

It's a trend with longevity. "At a time when so much of what surrounds us feels temporary," says Isabelle Dubern-Malleveys, co-founder of design platform The Invisible Collection, "there is something very compelling about objects conceived to outlive us." The meeting of tradition and innovation is the joy of modern silversmithing, adds Wagoner: "It's a continuation of a long, beautiful story that so many people have contributed to." ■ **HTSI**

Above: GEORG JENSEN stainless-steel wide Fold vase, £219

SZKŁO STUDIO x LINDSEY FONTIJN GLASS, SILVER AND GEMSTONE GOBLET, FROM £1,800



THE FIX