



Along with two Merman, Jacob Ignaz Hiltorf's 1840 Water Sprite left the Place de la Concorde Fountain to Urban Archaeology. The lighted Mahogany and Nickel Vitrine is a reproduction.

•143 Franklin Street, New York •
**RESURRECTIONS
FROM MANY RUINS**

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Passion is what drives some people towards their chosen career, for others it is even more than that. Gil Shapiro was spurred on by memories from his childhood – some sweet, some practical – when he began to rescue discarded furniture from ice cream parlors and barber shops, saving them from the scrap yard and selling them after careful restoration. ‘Urban Archaeology’, his collection of finds, has since grown into today’s Tribeca location consisting of over 600 square meters over five floors and including workshops. Hollywood star Russell Crowe rummaged out a bath tub made in turn of the century style, while musician Paul Simon found accessories for his shower. “Gil was one of the first who



At Urban Archaeology, one can find vintage pieces like icon lighting [below] or the auditorium seating [bottom of the page], which was reputed to be from Marcel Breuer [from Museum Folkwang]. Interior designers love of reproduction of old lights - here the warehouse and the cargo.



recognized and acknowledged beauty in the industrial past and how it could be reused again in a modern context”, reminisces designer Joe D’Urso. He is essentially the inventor of the ‘High Tech Look’ in lofts, in the late 1970’s Gil was already providing elements in chrome, steel, and glass. Sometimes the original product is reinvented. Six hundred marble stepping stones from Philip Johnsons Sculpture Garden were saved from destruction during the 2004 renovation of the Museum of Modern Art and have assumed new life as wash basin surrounds. And likewise the New York office of Al Italia is now home to a multi-dimensional piece created from Gio Ponti glass panels.

As well as antiques, Urban Archaeology also offers reproductions of furniture from the 1920’s and 30’s, for example tables echoing the style of the Parisian designer Pierre Chareau. A best seller originates from Park Avenue – the original of the built-in medicine cabinets was found in the apartment of Helena Rubinstein.

