

The Gulassa Brothers

“The difference between talent and genius is passion.” – David

“My love of materials guide the decisions for everything I make.” – Stefan

Timeline:

- 1960 David is born. Third child, Second boy.
- 1969 David, an early pack-rat, begins his lifelong “tchotchke” collection in his bedroom but soon had to move to the attic for his ever expanding collection. The elements below are a fraction of the entire collection of objects, tools and materials.
- 1970 David’s brother Stefan is born. Sixth and final child, Fourth boy.
- 1974 Both brothers attend an “Arts Magnet ”school in Oakland Ca, where every subject in the curriculum is centered around art. It is David’s last formal education.
- 1976 David cycles across the United States at the age of 16. His father is on a sabbatical and the family lives on a farm in Mass. David lives in a cabin on the property that he intricately clads in veneer, (obtained from who knows where), turning it into a 17th century drawing room.
- 1978 Later at 18 he cycles from Ireland to Africa and spends the year wandering. He meets an American architect, Bob Harris, in Morocco and travels with him and his wife across North Africa, Greece and Italy. Bob introduced to him to the architecture and the ancient wonders of the region. They part in Italy and David supports himself doing street portraits in front of the Duomo in Florence and spends the rest of his time in the Uffizi library looking at the sketches of the Italian masters, Michelangelo, Da Vinci and Della Francesca.
- 1979 At 19, David helps his uncle restore a five-story heavy timber 18th century mill and then works his way back across the US stopping to help build a mosque and learn how to do a domed roof and other such adventures.
- 1980 David returns to Colorado as a model maker in Bob Harris' architecture office. David squats on land that has an abandoned log cabin. He builds a roof, diverts a stream for water and restores the cabin. By the end of the year, (details are murky) David has to leave town.
- 1982 David opens a high-end woodworking and cabinet studio with his friend Paco. They combined their names and call it “Pacassa Studio”. David is asked to make the wood patterns needed to sand-cast a pair of ornate doors for Donald Trump. David has a girl friend who is studying to be a doctor and he does a lot of sketching of cadavers she is working with.
- 1986 Urban Accessories hires David and he moves his shop to Sultan, WA. It is there that he learns the craft of metal fabrication. He rents a warehouse and fills it with fabrication machines. (The street grates outside [Storefront] are “knock-offs” from an early design by David while he was at Urban Accessories.)
- 1988 Stefan graduates high school and travels extensively through Western & Eastern Europe. He supports himself by working on a flower farm in Holland and eventually attending school in Paris.
- 1989 David and his co-worker leave Urban Accessories to open David Gulassa & Company.

- 1993 David Gulassa & Company moves shop to Fremont, WA. He lives in the shop mezzanine. Stefan begins to work in David's shop.
- 1994 Stefan graduates from the California College of Arts with a degree in industrial design. He supports himself through school doing graphic design and begins to design toys. Stefan joins the Peace Corps to build low income housing in Tunisia, North Africa. David visits him during his two-year commitment. The two of them spend another month in Egypt drawing, reading and photographing the country.
- 1996 Stefan travels across West Africa eventually making his way north to Europe. He lands a job in Budapest working for a film production company.
- 1999 Ava Talula Lena Gulassa is born, the daughter of David and Tracy Mia Anderson. Stefan becomes the assistant designer at David Gulassa & Company. David revises the company name to Gulassa & Company. After considerable success they ask themselves, "Are we serious?" Subsequently, the previously open-air studio gets windows and doors, desks replace crates as work surfaces, and computers are purchased. The business transitions to 70% products and 30% custom work—a complete reversal from their business history. They create product lines of furniture, hardware and light fixtures. Their work appears in showrooms and design fairs across the United States.
- 2001 Returning home across Lake Union after a party at the shop, David dies in a kayak accident. The employees at Gulassa & Company fabricate his coffin out of steel, cedar, a steam engine, upholstery and an antique Philippine canoe he brought back from his trip there. A service commemorating David is held at Saint Mark's Cathedral. Over 500 people attend. The company is determined to move ahead. Stefan assumes the role of lead designer and figurehead for Gulassa & Company.
- 2009 After 10 years at Gulassa & Company Stefan leaves to spread his wings. He opens Stefan Gulassa LLC where he restores the workload balances back to producing 70% custom work and 30% production. He currently designs custom furniture, light fixtures, hardware, accessories and architectural details.

Essentially self-taught, the Gulassa brothers took on the world of custom hardware, fixtures and furnishings as a direct outgrowth of their travels, the people they encountered and the objects they collected. They worked in tandem with a mutual fearlessness in relation to the art of making things themselves. For many designers in the Pacific Northwest, visits to the Gulassa studio remain as potent memories: from the hundreds of "tchotchkes" in the entry lobby, to the prototypes they created, the remarkable collection of fabrication machinery and the curious and extraordinary people that worked there. Visitors were aware it was an unparalleled place. It was a seminal moment in Seattle's design history.

Stefan Gulassa LLC continues that legacy. Stefan's design philosophy is influenced both by his apprenticeship under his brother and his own experiences with life. He continues to expand his light fixture line with Phoenix Day and in 2012, he will launch a furniture product line with Sutherland Furniture. He continues to produce one of a kind pieces infused with creativity and soul.