



Made in New York

**Handcrafted Works
by Master Artisans**

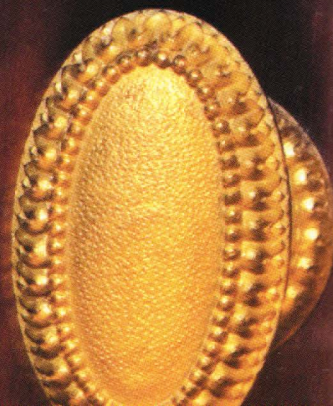
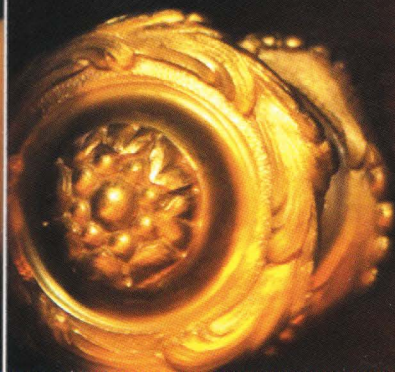
Nathalie and Ted Sann
Foreword by Jamie Drake

An Insider's Guide to
the Best Studios



RIZZOLI
NEW YORK

**Architectural
Hardware
Maker**



E. R. Butler & Co.
55 Prince Street
New York, NY 10012
212 925 3565
www.erbutler.com

Rhett Butler is a young entrepreneur with a vision of striking the perfect balance between craftsmanship, history, and technology. His company, E. R. Butler, may only date to 1990, but the history of beautiful, not just functional, hardware dates back centuries. His showroom at 55 Prince Street in Manhattan's SoHo neighborhood was, until 1897, the home of Prince Street Works, the silver department of Tiffany & Co. Today, Butler designs and produces custom architectural and cabinetry hardware such as bolts, escutcheons, knobs, levers, locks, pulls, and more, with a focus on American styles including Federal and Georgian.

Butler seeks out old, established companies, such as the Italian firm G. Bonomi & Figli and Boston's Vaughan, and approaches them about translating their hardware to the modern day without compromising style or quality. He obtains their catalogues and molds, and then reinvents them with his own twist. A cornerstone of his modern-day approach is his direct outreach to others, such as jewelry designer Ted Muehling, asking them to collaborate and translate their work to the medium of hardware. Butler's candlesticks, a bit of a departure from the core business, are among the company's most recognizable products.

The Butler showroom, open only to members of the interior-design trade, is where the designers modify and bring historic hardware to the next level, creating period hardware with the attributes and aesthetics of the present day. The designers draw or remodel much of the hardware in 3-D on a computer. While still incorporating handcrafted techniques, they trust the technology to make the pieces as efficiently as possible with the highest-quality materials.

Since 1997, part of Butler's production has been done in a factory in Red Hook, Brooklyn, in a spectacular redbrick building the company has been renovating little by little. This is where the hardware is cast and finished. One room is filled with the latest high-tech machinery; next door is a finishing room where one artisan hand-polishes a Ted Muehling doorknob to just the right patina while another gilds a gold-leaf knob. Although functional hardware is easy to come by, Butler has cultivated a following for his aesthetically beautiful creations, successfully elevating hardware to an art form.