

THE ART OF COLLECTING



A home for decorative arts

The PAD design fair in London has garnered a faithful following

BY NAZANIN LANKARANI

The annual art and design fair known as PAD, for the Pavilion of Art and Design, opens to the public on Wednesday with a marked shift toward the decorative arts and away from its past, with a reduced fine-arts roster.

In London, the fair's 68 exhibitors, in a gigantic white tent on Berkeley Square, will be primarily specialists in modern and vintage furniture, lighting, ceramics and jewelry, with fewer than 10 showing modern art.

"Design and decorative arts have always been a strength at PAD," said Patrick Perrin, a founder of the event and a former antiques dealer, of the fair, which is known by its acronym. "Given the caliber of our clientele, we are clearly responding to a demand."

Since 2007, this international design fair, which takes place alongside Frieze London, has garnered a faithful following, thanks in part to its brand of Parisian chic and the intimate ambience in which it displays its original selection of collectibles, such as artworks and functional objects.

"I always look forward to my first walk around the fair," Mr. Perrin said. "It is a delight to see what unexpected combination of genres and objects unfold here."

PAD takes pride in calling itself eclectic based on the variety of its handcrafted creations, which may include midcentury Scandinavian chairs, tribal masks, one-of-a-kind ceramics and vintage jewelry.

Mr. Perrin established the 20th-century art and design fair in Paris in 1997. Since then, he has expanded his concept first to London in 2007, then to Geneva in January 2016; plans were just announced to take the fair to Monte Carlo as well next spring.

The shift toward decorative arts, while it reinforces the fair's design identity, is not entirely deliberate. It is partly a result of competition from Frieze Masters, Frieze London's sister fair, which now offers a credible choice to those fine art dealers for whom the PAD fair had once been the only alternative venue to the more cutting-edge Frieze. This year, Frieze Masters has clipped away at PAD's fine arts lineup: Richard Green and Mazzoleni galleries, both first-time exhibitors at the pavilion fair last year, defected to Frieze Masters.

The only fine art newcomer this year is the Paris-based Hôlène Bailly, showing postwar works, including an ab-

stract 1966 "Composition Black Blue and Red" by Serge Poliakoff, alongside a 1981 Hans Hartung oil painting titled "TGI-H29."

"We had a successful run last year with PAD in Paris, so it was logical for us to participate in PAD London to connect with local collectors," said Pauline Ronel, Hôlène Bailly's manager. "This salon gives us broader international exposure."

The landscape of Mayfair, the London neighborhood that plays host to the fair, has changed in the last decade, and the fair has helped to turn the high-end neighborhood historically occupied by blue-chip art galleries and auction houses into a destination for design galleries, among them the avant-garde Carpenters Workshop, which moved here in 2008; Achille Salvagni (2015); and Gallery FUMI (2017).

"When we first opened here, design in London was only shown in Primko and prices were lower," said Julien Lombrai, co-founder of Carpenters Workshop, referring to an upscale but less international neighborhood of London. "It made no sense then for us to pay Mayfair rents, but today the local public has discovered design and many contemporary and vintage design galleries have moved here."

Carpenters Workshop Gallery, whose 1,000-square-foot booth occupies the prime spot at the entrance of the salon,

the Victoria and Albert, is showing delicately sculpted porcelain vessels in her signature unglazed chalk-like finish, which require months of handcrafting to produce botanical motifs with a rare modern sensibility.

For the first time, PAD London has devoted a special section to jewelry, with eight exhibitors covering the spectrum from vintage to contemporary. The Munich-based Hemmerle is showing an exquisite diamond-set bangle covered by geometric lattice in iron, a provocatively modern contrast of precious against common materials.

The jewelry designer Suzanne Sya is showing a selection of aluminum

jewelry in a booth designed by the Swiss mixed-media artist Sylvie Fleury, while Kerry Berrey will have "vintage watches from the 1960s and 70s."

The Paris-based jewelry designer Lorenz Blümmel, who in years past had shared space with another exhibitor, has moved into a booth of his own. His spectacular "Scarabee" (beetle) brooch is a large articulated piece in colored gems that doubles as a pendant and even diffuses a scent.

"PAD is a platform for discovery," Mr. Perrin said. "We take the curious and the commissioner on a journey to stimulate the eye and inspire a unique style of collecting."

Decorating Clockwise from top left: Hervé van der Straeten's "Bordeline" console table in colored polished stainless steel; Hemmerle diamond-set bangle; Ingrid Donat's "Banc Tribal" in bronze and leather; Hitomi Hosono's "White-ria Box"; "Composition Black Blue and Red" by Serge Poliakoff.

ILLUSTRATION BY JEFFREY MATHIAS. COURTESY OF HÉRIVÉ VAN DER STRAETEN. COURTESY OF HEMMERLE. COURTESY OF INGRID DONAT. COURTESY OF HITORI HOSONO. COURTESY OF ACHILLE SALVAGNI. COURTESY OF JULIEN LOMBRAI. COURTESY OF SUZANNE SYA. PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BEEBEY. PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BEEBEY.

With a scent Lorenz Blümmel's "Scarabee" brooch, in colored gems, doubles as a pendant and diffuses a scent.



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specializes in "design art," a category well represented by the work of the French sculptural designer Ingrid Donat, who has the entire booth to herself. In it, Ms. Donat has created an immersive space — the "apartment of a primitive art collector," according to Mr. Lombrai — complete with a massive sculpted bronze door, 16-foot-high wall panels covered in aluminum and parchment, and exotic furnishings like the "Banc Tribal," a bronze and leather bench produced in Ms. Donat's atelier outside Paris.

"We wanted the booth to be visually strong," Mr. Lombrai said. "All the collectors in the world pass through here with their interior decorators."

Some decorators do more than just pass through: PAD London now counts three interior designer exhibitors: Chaban Minassian and Pisto Paris, who are joined this year by the newcomer Veta Stefanidou Tsoukala, a Greek archaeologist turned interior designer.

All of them use their stands to showcase their signature versions of a sophisticated, modern interior for collectors looking not just for furnishings but also for ideas.

The French designer Hervé van der Straeten, who extends his own practice with equal force to furniture, lighting and jewelry, is showing a painterly collection of furniture, including his "Bordeline" stainless steel console table (32,600 euros, or about \$38,300, for an edition of 60) broken down into a series of geometric, rainbow-colored pieces mounted on the wall.

"The console's iridescent shades make it seem like the piece is surging out of the wall," Mr. Van der Straeten said. "I am not trying to be an artist; for me being a designer is a noble enough vocation."

Mr. Van der Straeten is also showing a pair of matching "Kimonos" cabinets (€450,000 for the pair), in which he has re-employed original 18th-century lacquered panels by inserting them into a modern piece of furniture, an extension "of the European love for chinoiserie."

At the Adrian Sassoon gallery, Hitomi Hosono, the Japanese-born ceramist whose work now figures in the collections of both the British Museum and

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