



DEALER'S NOTEBOOK

Aline Chastel

A champion of 20th-century French design for 20 years, Chastel finds great satisfaction in bringing heightened recognition to the accomplishments of unsung or forgotten practitioners. She focuses on work made between 1930 and 1970, a 40-year period of innovations in form and material, and her gallery's offerings are regularly new to the market. Here, she reflects on her path as a design dealer and the joy in connoisseurship.

DATE WITH DESTINY

While I was already passionate about 20th-century decorative arts as a student at the Sorbonne in the late 1980s, it wasn't until I discovered Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Hill House and Willow chairs that I had a real aesthetic shock. This led me to discover the work of the Four group, his early collaborators, and to admire their architectural and decorative creations. But it was a meeting with Laurent Maréchal, who became my partner and was very scholarly, that changed my life. Laurent infected me with his passion for antiques and 20th-century decorative arts, and in the early 1990s we decided to open a gallery in Saint-Germain-des-Près in Paris. For nearly 20 years we maintained that same high level of enthusiasm for design while honing our expertise. [Maréchal passed away in 2011.]

EXQUISITE RARITY

To me, describing an object as either important and/or exquisite alludes to its rarity. During my career, I've sold some extremely rare pieces created by Gilbert Poillerat, Serge Roche, Jean Royère, and Line Vautrin. Among these, the most significant may be a unique Roche buffet completely plated with oxidized mirrors, created by special order for a Parisian interior in 1933. Another is an ensemble of seats made of tempered glass by René Coulon in collaboration with Saint-Gobain for the 1937 Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques in Paris. I also remember the purchase of a rare and important 1956 Royère Sculpture salon suite by Larry Gagosian in 2005.



THE ESSENTIALS

AGE: 51
HAILS FROM: Paris
PRESIDES OVER: Galerie Chastel-Maréchal, Paris
SPECIALTY: 20th-century French decorative arts made between 1930 and 1970

DOCUMENTING THE REDISCOVERED

Market shifts and changing trends always leave some artists to be considered undervalued. Among those whose value has fallen these last years are Poillerat and André Arbus. There are also undervalued artists to be rediscovered, such as André Borderie and Denise Gatard for mid 20th-century French ceramics, and Serge Manzon and Yonel Lebovici for 1970s French furniture. We had a monographic exhibition dedicated to Lebovici in September 2014. But I'm particularly proud of our role in the rediscovery of Vautrin's mirrors. We published the first and only monograph of her work and organized exhibitions in 1998 and 2004.

HEADING TO PAD

We've participated in both the Paris and London editions of PAD since 2008, and the experience is very satisfying. Our participation in the 20th-anniversary edition will contribute to the fair's strong identity and reputation, which attract important European and international clients, including many decorators and private collectors. We're planning to present pieces by Poillerat, Royère, Vautrin, Jacques Adnet, and François-Xavier Lalanne. We're also planning a few surprises.

APART FROM THE PACK

What's special about my job is that I have the chance to offer my collectors pieces I bought with my taste: Royère, Vautrin, Serge Mouille, Alexandre Noll, and Georges Jouve among them. I create my own universe that expands over time. My curious spirit always leads me to discover new things. These many years of working have given me the ability to forge bonds of trust with my clients, private ones as well as professional ones, and I couldn't be happier with the journey.



PARIS

Bon Chic Bon Genre

Early spring will be especially festive in the Tuileries when **Pavillon of Art & Design Paris** celebrates its 20th birthday, beginning March 31. Visitors to the four-day design event will again be treated to its well-curated range of objects, from historical and contemporary design and jewelry to tribal and modern visual art, all courtesy of leading French dealers—including first-time exhibitors **L'Eclaireur**, **Galerie Kreo**, **Meubles et Lumières**, and **Armel Soyer**—alongside their global partners.

To mark PAD London's 10th anniversary this year, the Paris fair welcomes several first-time British exhibitors as well, including **Gallery Fumi**, **Rose Uniacke**, **De Jonckheere**, and **Repetto**.

Founder **Patrick Perrin** has been honing his original fair concept—to present a scope of carefully selected objects that reflect the eclectic tastes of true individuals—in the service of blurring the traditional boundaries between art and design. Hybrid offerings include **Claude Lévêque's** 2014 Venin necklace in gold, at **Minimasterpiece** gallery; and **Philippe Nacson's** LED-illuminated 3CL light sculpture, shown above, brought by **Galerie Perpetch & Bringand**. Despite the expanding boundaries, iconic works of design, such as the circa-1939 **Jean Prouvé** six-drawer table at **Galerie Downtown François Laffanour**, will continue to anchor the fair.

"The engaging aspect of PAD is its invitation to enter a personal collection, conceived by a selection of local and international galleries," says Perrin. But ever the nationalist, he adds, "If the art market is no longer Parisian, the most famous art dealers are still French." —DW

FROM TOP: PAD AND GALERIE PERPETCH & BRINGAND; MINA RODRIGUEZ