

EARLY SPRING SALES ROUND UP

As mad as a March hare

Despite it all, the spring sales have already started to sprung and bear fruits of strong results. A enthusiasm that could be explained with various hypothesis and which the *Gazette Drouot* compared with the Japanese appetite for art in the 1980s, just before a historical avalanche of bankruptcies and scandals. Therefore, a small word of caution is in order. In times when it has become difficult to see works of art and design in person, one must be cautious about authenticity.

Requesting provenance, literature, condition reports, detailed pictures and expert advice is crucial whether you are looking at looking at an ashtray, a library or an entire room. The work needs to fit all the criteria especially when buying in the 20th century realm.



Les Palmiers smoking room reassembled by Phillips

The design sales of the ‘major’ auction houses have not been released yet but a few exiting works have already been unveiled. The most impressive so far is the *Palmier* smoking room designed by Jean Dunand for the Parisian residence of Mademoiselle Colette Aboucaya (1930-1936). The striking set of panels represent an *avant-garde* abstractive depiction of a palmeraie. It will leave France for the first time to be offered in London (sale date tbc). I had the chance to see this Art Deco vision at the Philipps warehouse in Paris guided by the passionate presentation of Elie Massaoutis, head of design, France. As I was wondering how they managed to put this room together again and again he told me this endearing detail; it has always been the same person to handle the dismantling and the reinstallation since the panels left their original home in 1997.

Whilst waiting for the other giant auction houses to reveal their secrets, other attractive sales have been announced. Ahead of a visit to Paris to see these sales in person, I would like to share a few works that caught my eye. Do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions or a shared enthousiasm.

What to click on

In Paris

Starting on the 23rd of March, Sotheby's will be offering a private collection of the Manoir de Saint-Calais. This beautiful 17th century home has been enchanted by the whimsical creations of the Le Gall alongside pieces of antique furniture, and works by David Hockney, Camille Pissarro and Allan Ramsay. The *Anthémis* low table has always been my favorite model and the screen *Le rêve de la souris* is a rare opportunity to add beauty as well as wit in one's interior.

[Sotheby's Paris, Saint-Calais, un Manoir Enchanté par Hubert Le Gall, online auction from 23 March through April 1 2021, 15:00](#)



Pair of *Fleurs Anthémis* low tables by Hubert Le Gall, 2013, patinated bronze
Estimate: 8,000-12,000 EUR



Le rêve de la souris (A mouse's dream)
screen by Hubert Le Gall, 2005, lacquered wood and gilt bronze, Estimate: 10,000-50,000 EUR



[Piasa, Paris, Italian Design, Live sale 25th of March 2021](#)

Piasa has put together a very seductive sale where it is difficult to choose between the curves and undulations of the Italian masters. However, the estimates remain high.



Screen by Carlo Scarpa, ebonized beech, acid etched mirror and glass, 1942
Estimate: 50,000 -70,000 €



Dining table by Angelo Mangiarotti, bronze and walnut, 1973
Estimate: 10,000- 15,000 EUR

Bilia table lamps by Gio Ponti, painted aluminium and glass, edited by Fontana Arte, 1931
Estimate: 3,000-4,000 EUR



[Artcurial, Paris, Intérieurs du XXIème Siècle, 23 Mars 2021](#)

The bidding is open for Artcurial online sale. The attractive estimates as well as the beautiful and charming lots will undoubtedly attract the attention of collectors and amateurs. It is always interesting to register and follow these sale where one just might find a gem for a steal. My eye was caught by works edited by Memphis. Radical design in all its audacity might just be what one needs right now.

Treetops floorlamp by
Ettore Sottsass, 1981
lacquered metal,
edited by Memphis
Milano
Estimate:
1,000 - 1,500 EUR



Side table *Hollywood*
by Peter Shire, 1983
lacquered metal, painted
wood, edited by
Memphis Milano
Estimate:
600 - 800 EUR



[Artcurial, Paris, Italian Design sale, 13th of April 2021](#)

However Artcurial main course will come later in April. The Italian design sale is full of marvels and well photographed. On my radar you can find a set of handles designed by Gio Ponti. These indicate the level of detail at which the maestro operated when conceiving interiors. The handles were inspired by geometric clarity, according to which the hand naturally adapts to the shape. The alluring Bellini design for the *Bambole* sofa and chairs is an icon of the 1970s and my personal favorite. The leather on the present examples has a beautiful patina and will add groove to any interior. Finally the Superstudio *Quaderna* side board will add just a zest of radicality in your life that can be softened by the mesmerizing geometry of the Sottsass mirror or the earthly ceiling lights by Fulvio Bianconi.



Mirror by Ettore Sottsass, circa 1959
Estimation 15 000 - 20 000 EUR



Ceiling lights by Fulvio Bianconi,
tinted glass
Estimation 3 000 - 5 000 EUR



Quaderna sideboard by Superstudio Group, circa
197, Green and white melaminated on wood,
estimate: 4,000-6,000 EUR



A set of double nickel-plated brass fifteen
door handles by Gio Ponti, 1956
Estimation: 3 000 - 5 000 EUR



Bambole sofa and armchairs by Mario Bellini, circa 1972
brown leather and foam, sold separately, each with an estimate of 4,000-6,000 EUR

En passant:



Slend and splendid console by Paolo Buffa offered in Milan

Wall console by Paolo Buffa, circa 1950
wood and marble

Estimate: 800,00 - 1.000,00 EUR

[Cambi Aste, Design 200, Milan, Wednesday 24 March](#)



Custom headboard and footboard by Peter Larkin, USA,
circa 1975

Estimate: \$3,000–5,000

The present lot was custom designed by Peter Larkin for the home he shared with his wife, artist Racelle Strick. Larkin, a well-known production designer whose work included the Mothership—a flying saucer stage prop used by Parliament-Funkadelic in wild performances during the 1970s—split his time between New York City and the couple's vacation home in Amagansett.

[Wright, Chicago, Design sale, 25 March 2021, 11 am ct](#)



Chauffeuse 'P3' by Tito Agnoli
metal and rattan

Estimate: 150 - 250 EUR

[Drouot, Paris, Arts décoratifs du XXe, Sale: Wednesday 31 March 2021](#)

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