

## AUTUMN/WINTER SALES ROUND UP

The market is alive, long live the market. In the midst of it all the design sales are lining up and the catalogues of the big three auction houses are filling with iconic 20th century names with robust estimates. It seems that consignors were to the rendez-vous these last months and some impressive pieces of design are emerging on the market. Ahead of my arrival in Paris to see the 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 enthusiasm.

The last past weeks have already provided their share of emotions; Sotheby's sold, on behalf of the Brooklyn Museum, a unique dining table by Carlo Mollino for 6,181,350 USD (estimate 2-3,000,000 USD). The auction house also offered the ravishing second part of the Nelson Rockefeller collection (the first was auctioned last year) comprising the designs by Alberto Giacometti commissioned by the decorator Jean Michel Frank. Every lot sold very successfully and one the pair of the Giacometti sconces entitled 'le Poing' sold for 1,956,000 USD. Over the pond, a couple of weeks ago, Phillips sold a console by Lucio Fontana and Osvaldo Borsani for £1,135,700.



Interior view of Nelson Rockefeller's apartment

Therefore the hopes (and the stakes) are high for the upcoming sales. Will the participation live up to the last editions confirming that there is always a market for high end design? Or will this second part of the year be affected by the current mood of austerity and resignation.

An important change to note - the top auction houses have discreetly raised their buyer's premium. Christie's is now at 25% of the hammer price up to \$600,000, plus 20% of the hammer price from \$600,001 to \$6,000,000, and 14.5% of the hammer price over \$6,000,000. On the 1st of August, Sotheby's added an 'overhead premium' of 1% of a lot's hammer price, in addition to their buyer's premium, which presently stands at 25% of the hammer price up to \$400,000, 20% of amounts in excess of \$400,000 up to and including \$4,000,000, and 13.9% of in excess of \$4,000,000. Phillip's has increased their buyer's premium to 26% for the first of those categories. These raises seem hardly justified considering that major budget reducing measures such as the elimination of paper catalogues, reduced staff counts, joint sales and so on have been implemented. Is this the condition for these houses to survive? Or is this the Achilles' heel that will pave the way for smaller auction houses to win over new clients?

# What to click on

In Paris

[Artcurial, Paris, Art Deco Design, live sale 1st of December, 2.30 pm](#)

Down the Champs Elysées, Artcurial will hold its Art Deco sale. Amongst the highlights we find a wooden version of the 'Religieuse' by Pierre Chareau presented as the 'only one in this version known to date' for the finesse of its wooden base. Certainly something to see. The 'Grand Signal' by Serge Mouille, a perfect testimony of the 60s vibes and energy is a rare sight at auction (except for the astute fakes one regularly encounters). Indeed, this model was only produced for about year. More decorative than historical the 'Baleine' armchairs are almost irresistible. Finally the 'Ronce' necklace by Claude Lalanne, despite being an Artcurial edition, could be the poetic gift you were looking for.



A pair of 'Baleine' armchairs by Hubert Le Gall, 2004  
metal and white wool  
Estimate: 2 500 - 3 000 EUR  
Lot 96



'Ronce' necklace by  
Claude Lalanne, circa  
1989  
gilt bronze  
signed and numbered  
Estimate: 1 500 - 2 000  
EUR  
Lot 83

'Grand Signal' by Serge Mouille; 1962  
black lacquered steel and blue fluorescent light  
Estimate: 80,000-100,000 EUR  
Lot 63



[Christie's Paris, Design, live sale 3 December, 3 pm](#)

A few streets away Christie's is presenting an exciting sale featuring the gotha of French 20th century design. The star of the show is a mesmerizing green lacquer commode by Jean Dunand. Made in 1930 at the height of the designer's fame (by then he had a workshop using more than 50 workers) this chest of drawers seems to display the creative inventions that Jean Dunand is remembered for ; the lacquer, the aerial geometry, the brass work, and so on. The chest is part of the brand new Jean Dunand catalogue raisonné published a few months ago by Amélie Marcilhac. From the same collection comes a striking 'Table à Corne' by Mark du Plantier. The design is said to have come from one of the designer's trip to Spain. Also worth mentioning is the Collection Jean Goldberg featuring a suite commissioned to Jean Royère, a straw marquetry dream. Between these design apex take a look at the divine soap holders by Armand Albert Rateau, the slender day bed by Paul Iribe and the sculptural desk by Hiquily (a special commission acquired directly from the artist).

A desk by Phillippe Hiquily, special commission, 1968-1972  
hammered brass and stained acrylic glass,  
signed and dated 72  
Estimate: 70,000-90,000  
EUR  
Lot 216



A pair of soap holder by Armand Albert Rateau, circa 1925  
each signed A.A.RATEAU INVR PARIS  
Estimate: 30,000-50,000 EUR  
Lot 68



Méridienne by Paul Iribe, 1914, fabric upholstered amaranth  
stamped PAUL IRIBE and dated 1914  
Estimate: 40,000-60,000 EUR  
Lot 54

The bidding is now open for the online sale of the The Neumann-Hug Collection subtitled 'Spirit of the Bauhaus.' I find this sale to be a true gem for anyone interested in Bauhaus and modernism or willing to acquire their first piece of historic design. Indeed this sale is very reasonably priced and offers a visual journey through the Bauhaus movement and its ramifications. It features protagonists of the movement such as Marcel Breuer, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, Marianne Brandt and their iconic designs as well as lesser known names and happy discoveries, all with spotless provenances. The attractive estimates as well as the online format of the sale will attract the attention of collectors but it is a good opportunity to enter the game particularly considering the lack of interest this period has received in the last years.



Early set of nesting tables, model B9-9C, by Marcel Breuer, 1925-1926  
chrome-plated tubular steel and painted wood  
manufactured by Gebrüder Thonet AG, Frankenberg, Eder  
Estimate: 2,000 - 3,000 EUR  
Lot 11



Mies chair and ottoman by Archizoon Associati, 1969  
chrome-plated steel, rubber and cowhide  
manufactured by Poltronova, Italy  
Estimate: 3,000 - 5,000 EUR  
Lot 53



Set of seven door handles, eleven window handles and ten keyholes plates in the style of Walter Gropius, circa 1922  
nickel-plated brass  
Estimate: 300 - 500 EUR  
Lot 4

[Sotheby's Paris, Important Design, 17 December 2020, 2:30 PM](#)

The sale will be led by a Charlotte Perriand ensemble acquired directly from the galerie StephSimon in 1975. Amongst this elegant sale I would like to draw the attention on another divine touch by Armand Rateau in the shape of door handles, an exquisite coiffeuse by Maison Janssen that belonged to Gabrielle Chanel herself and a masterpiece of ceramic by Pierre Soulages for the Manufacture de Sèvres.

A dressing table and armchair by Maison Janssen, circa 1930  
chromium plated metal, opal glass, fabric upholstery  
Estimate: 30,000-50,000 EUR  
Lot 54



Vase by Pierre Soulages, designed in 2000, the series started in 2008, this model manufactured in 2010  
porcelain, gilding and metal  
From an edition of 10  
Estimate: 200,000-300,000 EUR  
Lot 160



Six handles by Armand-Albert Rateau (1882-1938), circa 1925  
gilt patinated bronze and ivory  
Estimate: 6,000-8,000 EUR  
Lot 38

En passant:

[Million, Paris, Arts Décoratifs du XXIème, Live sale 4 December 2020, 2 PM](#)



A Vase by Jean Boris-Lacroix  
black opalescent glass vase into a nickered metal frame  
stamped  
Estimate: 2,000-3,000 EUR  
Lot 166



A "Sing Sing" chair designed by Shiro Kuramata in 1985  
steel  
Estimate: 400-600 EUR  
Lot 258

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