

ART & COLLECTING



## Fairest of the fair

*With an intimate, boutique feel and over 60 highly prestigious exhibitors, art and design fair PAD London is always a big hit with discerning interior designers and collectors. These galleries sum up its genre-crossing appeal / By Jonathan R Jones*

Held every October in Mayfair's heart, Berkeley Square, the Pavilion of Art and Design (PAD) feels more like an eclectic series of exhibitions than an art and design fair. The skill of the fair's president and CEO Patrick Perrin and his team lies in curating an intelligent edit of more than 60 galleries, creating a kind of modern-day Grand Tour through antiquity to cutting-edge contemporary design. Prominent international galleries from across Europe,

North America and Asia come together to offer exceptional museum-quality pieces, often displayed in innovative and theatrical stands. Although some art fairs can be overwhelming in scale, PAD has a boutique feel and is therefore much easier to negotiate.

Several of the galleries exhibiting this autumn highlight the London location, and the Mayfair address in particular, as especially important. Mathias Rastorfer >

ABOVE: Adrian Sassoon will be showing work by Junko Mori ('Very Large Silver Organism'; 'Twisted Leaf', left) and Hitomi Hosono ('Wisteria Bowl', right)

OPPOSITE: An alabaster plaque (3rd millennium BC, possibly Syrian) will be on sale through Phoenix Ancient Art



/ALTO/

of Switzerland-based fine art gallery Galerie Gmurzynska told me that “there is no better place than Berkeley Square in London to show great art and design in a luxurious setting. Unlike Frieze and Frieze Masters, where people tend to go once and then do not come back, PAD attracts the right buyers to come several times during the course of the fair and enjoy a high-class presentation in a convenient location.”

And of course, returning several times can be important when making a significant purchase. As renowned London dealer Adrian Sassoon comments: “Within London, the location is very accessible to people who have other things to do in the area – this is reflected in the fact that many people visiting PAD return again over two or even three days.”

This year, Sassoon will be showing a range of contemporary pieces in ceramic, glass and metal, including new work from gallery artists Felicity Aylieff, Michael Eden, Kate Malone and Hitomi Hosono. There will also be a chance to see more of Junko Mori, whose exquisite work in metal has recently joined the collection of the British Museum. Sassoon will also showcase work by Chilean-born

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ABOVE: *Galerie Kreo is known for its cutting-edge collaborations with contemporary designers, such as Pierre Charpin, whose ‘Mini Eclipse’ Lamp will be at PAD London*

OPPOSITE, TOP: *Artist Scott Campbell’s watercolour and oil, Never Alone, on sale through Galerie Gmurzynska*

OPPOSITE, BOTTOM: *SMO Gallery’s offerings include this ‘Marguerite des Sables’ brass coffee table by Georges Mohasseb*



Fernando Casasepère, whose large ‘Watercolour’ blocks exploit the properties of porcelain to create works that resemble quarried stone.

Galerie Gmurzynska will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2015, and is kicking off celebrations early with a special presentation at PAD. Called “50/100”, its display will celebrate 50 years by showing a cross-section of the gallery’s past programme, which represents the last 100 years of European and North American painting and sculpture. The gallery represents the estates of Yves Klein, Alexander Rodchenko and David Smith among others, and is particularly well known for championing the 20th-century Russian avant garde.

For its first PAD, Phoenix Ancient Art (based in New York and Geneva) will show some spectacular antiquities, including a 5,000-year-old plaque, possibly Syrian. There will also be two Cycladic marble idols, which are bound to appeal to those who appreciate what director Ali Aboutaam describes as “the pure and modern lines of Cycladic art”. For Aboutaam, PAD is the right fit for ancient art because it is “the most ‘object-oriented’ show, with several dealers in antiquities, >





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*The fair's central location is cited as one secret of its success – visitors might pop in two or three times*

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tribal art and Pre-Columbian art, balanced with other fine and decorative arts".

Paris-based Galerie Kreo will display pieces by designers François Bauchet, Pierre Charpin, Konstantin Grcic and Hella Jongerius among others, alongside expertly chosen vintage pieces. London has special significance for the gallery since it opened a branch on Hay Hill in September, seconds from Berkeley Square.

SMO Gallery also shows contemporary design and is proud to highlight work by makers that combine traditional and contemporary craftsmanship from the Lebanon and further afield. Highlights include a new table and lamp from SMO Gallery founder Gregory Gatsereia, and a

new sculpture by architect, furniture and product designer Eva Szumilas.

Although there are sister PAD shows in Paris and LA each spring, it's the London edition that collectors and connoisseurs return to. "London is an important location for the art world in general, but now even more so for our trade," says Ali Aboutaam. "With a number of established galleries and auction houses involved in antiquities and a large potential base of collectors, it's a key centre for the ancient art trade." And the audience at PAD are not just private collectors, as Adrian Sassoon explains: "Interior designers, decorators and architects in particular visit this fair much more than others."

I asked Mathias Rastorfer of Galerie Gmurzynska what the value of PAD London was to his gallery, compared to other art and design fairs. His response sums up what makes PAD so special: "Its success is in being small but of high quality, which is something that other fairs tend to be unable to do. They are either huge and become a destination but are therefore overwhelming, or they are small but lack the range of significant galleries to make them compelling. The way that Patrick Perrin has carefully nurtured his concept of PAD is unique in the context of other fairs." **A**

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