



PAD: ART WITH HEART

As the Pavilion of Art and Design returns to Berkeley Square this month, Lorna Davies meets its creator Patrick Perrin, and finds his passion for innovation over investment truly inspiring



“**E**veryone wants the same, today, and that’s what PAD is fighting against,” Patrick Perrin laments from the first floor of Morton’s, overlooking the square which his art fair will fill from October 3.

“Unfortunately, in fine arts, a lot of people have absolutely no taste, no culture, no knowledge, they just know 50 artists from 1970 to today and that’s it,” he continues.

It’s a damning verdict from the founder of the Pavilion of Art and Design (PAD), which takes place in Paris in March and Berkeley Square in Mayfair this month, but he somehow gets away with it with his Parisian charm. After spending time with the Frenchman, it’s clear he is very passionate about what he does.

“I want different dealers, I want people with taste. Taste, spirit, choice – those are the three major words for PAD because with no taste, with no choice, with no spirit, a dealer is nothing. You can mix an object of £150 with an object of £1.5 million you know, with taste, for me it has absolutely no difference.”

Taste is incredibly important to Perrin, as is bucking the trend of showing the contemporary big hitters.

“At PAD what you will find if you have a Damien Hirst and a Christopher Wool on the wall, is something you don’t have. Don’t buy a print of Damien Hirst for £2,800. Either buy a real Damien Hirst or you buy the best from a smaller artist you can find. But the people, they all want the same. Their friends come for dinner, they identify two Miro prints on the wall – it’s shit! It’s getting worse and worse. The last 15 years have been completely killing the urban way of life, culture, education.”

Perrin has been immersed in the art market since his youth. After studying art history in London and working for Christie’s in New York, he opened a gallery with his father on the place Beauvau in Paris, specialising in 18th century French furniture.



TOP: Keith Haring, *Untitled (Elephant)*, 1987
Courtesy of Galerie Von Vertes

ABOVE: Jean Royère, *Pair of Bouquet wall lights*, 1950
Courtesy of Chastel-Mardchal

OPPOSITE: Patrick Perrin

BELOW: Jaguar tripod vase
 Courtesy of Galeria Mennoz © Frederic Duten,
 Studio Asselberghs

BOTTOM: Christopher Duffy,
Abyss Table, 2015
 Courtesy of Sarah Myersonagh



He nurtured a passion for old master drawings and created the Salon du Dessin in Paris in 1991. Perrin then opened his own gallery on the rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré and has published a collection of six monographs entitled *Les Cahiers du Mobilier* (furniture notebooks) dedicated to prominent cabinet makers in the 18th century.

It's almost 10 years since he brought the fair to London, nearly 20 since it launched in Paris. It began in 1997 as the Pavillon des Antiquaires et des Galeries d'art (the Pavilion of Antique Dealers and Art Galleries), a fair inspired by the cabinets de curiosités tradition in France, and had a space next to the Eiffel Tower.

"At the beginning we were mixing old masters, antiques, contemporary and everything, and then suddenly antiques were a little less fashionable – I still love them, I buy 17th-18th century – but things have changed," says Perrin.

The London incarnation of the fair was first in Hanover Square. "Westminster said, you can have this and then, if it goes well, Berkeley Square," Perrin says. It did, and a year later PAD London moved to its current location. The fair's focus is on eclecticism, covering modern art, photography, design, decorative and tribal art.

"PAD had 10 years of growth and then we had to change to fit what is the market and what is the taste today. But it was not only commercial, my own taste was moving also to things I was not even looking at before. We were the first fair to integrate 20th century decorative arts and contemporary design. Twenty years ago, when you were talking about design, they would say 'no, English 18th century pair of armchairs,' they were not thinking about design. Today, everyone is into design, everyone loves 20th century decorative arts. Fewer and fewer people are interested in 18th and 19th century."

Perrin himself loves arts and crafts. "Love. It's very English. I am buying it for myself. I have an appointment with Martin from Blairman [H. Blairman & Sons] tonight at 5pm to see what he has in the gallery. He is the best dealer in the world for art and craft. He's on Mount Street,

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by appointment only, and exhibits at PAD*.

Blairman adds to 65 international galleries participating in this year's fair, with 14 newcomers and 52 returning exhibitors. Exhibitors are selected by a committee including David Gill, Adrian Sassoon, Robin Katz and Hamiltons Gallery's Tim Jefferies, although Perrin says it's not difficult, "because the good ones are not a big number in decorative arts and contemporary design, so we all know what the good ones are."

In Paris, PAD has five booths dedicated to small, young dealers. PAD allows them to exhibit for free in their first year, then they pay a third and so on.

"It brings a lot to the fair, it's fresh, it's new, it's always a big benefit," Perrin says. He'd love to do it in London, but the Berkeley Square location makes expanding difficult. "In London, the problem is that we don't have that flea market that we have in Paris – that is a big source."

There are less dealers now because "everything is difficult today for young dealers, buyers, restoring, selling," says Perrin. "So it's a very interesting job, but not an easy one to start today. I'm not sure I would recommend my sons to do it. People are moving to sofas and flat screens."

He's in London often, here today to visit the Chelsea Flower Show.

"Mayfair is one of the last places, as well as maybe the left bank in Paris, where you can have good food, good hotels, good shops, good tailors, a little bit of luxury, a little bit of shops that are not the same. This is the thing that I can't stand; you go to cities around the world and it's the same street, same shops. London is one of the only cities with Paris where it's still a little bit different. For me, Berkeley Square, Mayfair, London, it's the centre of the world."

Perrin is not a fan of the mega galleries that have opened in Mayfair in recent years. "It's an industry, it's a huge success, but at the same time, it's so impersonal. Money is the issue, not art."

"PAD is absolutely the contrary of that. The galleries put their soul on the table when they exhibit at PAD. [Art] for investment I do not believe. The money is lost, but the pleasure is my gain."

PAD London is at Berkeley Square, October 5-9. Tickets £25. www.pad-fairs.com

RIGHT: Nic Fiddian Green, Dawn pendant, 2016
Courtesy of Louise Goussens Gallery

BELOW: Richard Pettibone, Andy Warhol, Tivo Elvis, 1964
Courtesy of Galerie Sieb Verbeke

BOTTOM: Reinier Bosch, Secret Lagoon, 2016
Courtesy of Poreobekkie

