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o be successful as an art dealer in London,” says Loïc Le Gaillard, joint owner, with Julien Lombrail, of Mayfair’s Carpenters Workshop Gallery, “we realised you had to be either very wealthy or very well-connected. We were neither.” Which meant, of course, that he and Lombrail (pictured right) had to do some lateral thinking. There’s

nothing like the prospect of failure to sharpen the wits – the long-time friends joined forces and carved their own niche in the market: “functional sculpture”.

“We were always much more interested in form than function,” says Le Gaillard (pictured left). “There’s such a fine line between a piece of sculpture and a practical object. We work with artists whose eye we admire and ask them to add an element of functionality.”

Today, among a certain elite group, the Carpenters Workshop Gallery has a reputation that stretches around the world. Its sophisticated clientele includes those who head up international fashion labels or reign over blue-chip companies; and at PAD, Design Miami/Basel and last year’s Biennale des Antiquaires (where it was the only contemporary design gallery to be given a

