

THE REPORT

See What Interior Designers–Turned–Dealers Are Launching at PAD London

Rose Uniacke, Achille Salvagni, and others have adopted the dual mantle of decorator and dealer; these are their latest offerings

TEXT BY TOM MORRIS

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Achille Salvagni's booth at PAD London shows off his Sahara collection.

Photo: Courtesy of Achille Salvagni

"Because they don't find what they want!" explains Patrick Perrin, director of PAD London design fair, discussing the rise of interior designers launching their own collections at this year's edition, which opened to the public today. "It takes so long to find the right object for the right place, they just make it themselves." And a select number have taken it one step further, selling their own designs as well as those they've sourced.

With exacting clients, hefty contact books, and relationships with leading craftsmen, interior designers have long commissioned pieces for their residential projects. As decorators' brand appeal grows, it makes sense that they capitalize on it by releasing pieces to the wider market and adopting a multidisciplinary stance. They also know where to source unique antiques (accordingly, there is today a very fine line between decorating, designing, and dealing).

Of course, the concept isn't new. As Perrin points out, "They are like les assembles of the 1920s and 30s when interior designers, architects, decorators—no matter what you called them—designed all the furniture for you, from the glasses to the forks and knives to the commode in the bathroom. That period is coming back."

Achille Salvagni

Italian-born architect-turned-furniture designer Salvagni has a history of working with some of the most specialized craftsmen and workshops in Italy and beyond, with a back catalogue of designing exquisite homes and yachts. Until 2013, they were kept exclusively for his residential clients, but the demand led him to open his own gallery in Mayfair, London, dealing his own

designs to a wider audience. The atelier displays them alongside antiques and modern classics too. At PAD this year, the gallery presents the ochre-tinged ‘Sahara’ showcase—a series of desert-inspired pieces designed by Salvagni.



A Frits Henningsen chair for sale from Rose Uniacke.

Photo: Simon Upton

Rose Uniacke

Leading British interior designer Rose Uniacke has comfortably slipped among her decorating, designing, and dealing roles for years. She started out as a furniture restorer before dealing antiques in her Pimlico showroom; now she counts the Beckhams as residential clients. “Rose does a fantastic job with fantastic style and quality,” says Perrin. At PAD, she is showing a pair of sinewy easy chairs designed by Danish designer Frits Henningsen in the 1950s plus a silk textile wall hanging by Korean artist Lee So-Ra.



A ceiling lamp by Angelo Lelli at Dimore Gallery.

Photo: Courtesy of Dimore Gallery

Dimore Studio

Look at most fashion runways today and the line between couture, sportswear, found objects, and stylist props is difficult to find. It's the same with Dimore Studio, the Milanese interior design firm so beloved of the fashion crowd today. No one else sums up the multidisciplinary stance of designers today than Dimore Studio founders Emiliano Salci and Britt Moran, who turned their apartment in Milan into a gallery, where they sell a mix of midcentury finds, contemporary commissions, and their own designs. At a relatively pared-back, monochrome showcase at PAD, the studio kept their dealer's hats on with 1950s lighting by Angelo Lelli, lounge chairs by Osvaldo Borsani, and a contemporary console by Ilaria Bianchi.



Centaures tables by Pinto Paris.

Photo: Jacques Pepion

Pinto

Casablanca-born, Paris-based Alberto Pinto (1945–2012) was not only famous for designing the homes of European aristocrats, Hollywood starlets, and Middle Eastern royalty in his heyday, but also for working with leading ateliers to produce opulent lines of handmade furniture, lighting, tableware, and linen. This continues today under the directorship of Davina Pinto Fdeda, with a heavy emphasis on materials. At PAD London, Pinto is showing resin stools, horn nesting tables, and a set of tables in horn and bronze.