

THE DESIGN EDIT

✂ FOR COLLECTORS AND DREAMERS ✂

FRANCE HAS MAINTAINED a national furniture collection, called the Mobilier National, for over three and a half centuries. From André-Charles Boulle (1642-1732) through to India Mahdavi and the Bouroullec brothers, it represents a panorama of the French design scene. Last spring an “exceptional” call for projects with an overall budget of €200,000 was launched – primarily to support young designers during the pandemic. As a result, several dozen acquisitions have joined the prestigious collection.



The Mobilier National purchased pieces by two designers represented by Galerie Gosserez in Paris: ‘Brass’ desk (2020) by Valentin Loellmann and a pair of ‘Nida’ lamps (2019-2020) by Vincent Poujardieu.

Loellmann is a German designer based in Maastricht. His ‘Brass’ desk, with three brass legs and curvilinear wooden top, was envisioned to break with the standard four-legged archetype. “I try to break all the rules in furniture-making of what’s possible and what’s allowed,” Loellmann, 37, says. “This organic shape changes your habit of how to approach a piece as it’s more playful and less restrictive.” Indeed, Loellmann’s aesthetic philosophy is based on changing perceptions and behaviour, a tendency dating back to his childhood desire to divert and reshape the water flow of a stream by creating a small dam. In the same way, people sitting around the ‘Brass’ desk can choose where to sit, thanks to its fluid form. “I try to make pieces that don’t scream but that [might induce] somebody to think differently,” he explains.

Bordeaux-based Poujardieu drew inspiration from the ‘sandwich panels’ of man-made honeycomb structures to make his ‘Nida’ lamps. Then he researched how the light would pass through the hexagonal patterns of the aluminium sheets, which have a 24-carat gold finish. “Over three years I developed a concept about the effects of light passing through this structure in order to achieve interesting, optical, kinetic effects,” Poujardieu, 57, says. Fascinated by certain types of technology, Poujardieu works with materials that are manufactured for the aerospace industry. The son of a watchmaker father, he has a meticulous attention to detail that, combined with his contemporary art background, finds expression in technically advanced pieces. His lamps were very successful last year – the badge of honour bestowed by the Mobilier National certainly enhanced their popularity.