



ERTE Marries EAMES, The Art of Eclecticism

By Gina Samarotto, Samarotto Design Group

For those who swoon at a glimpse of cabriole leg leading to a delicately turned ankle, are mesmerized by the dripping crystals of a timeworn French chandelier or lust after the curvaceously provocative form of a mid-century modern table; heady attraction to good design – regardless of period or age – is an all too familiar emotion.

In design, eclecticism is a magical place where Erte marries Eames, Louis meets Leleu and Murano dances with modern in rooms rife with interest and rich in style. Done well, the design floats above preconceived rules to create an aesthetic built upon subtle nods to form and function. Modern spaces are persuaded to surrender themselves to grandeur; ornate places are wooed into welcoming minimalist touches with grace. The lines of age blur, rigidly defined labels fade until all

that is left is the simple beauty and commonality brought by complementing curves, lines and tones – features that meld into one delectable, eclectic delight.

Acquiring the cache necessary to create such broad appeal is more than a design driven activity, it's a passionate treasure hunt. From the controlled chaos of Le Marché aux Puces de Saint-Ouen, the open market place of just outside Paris' 18th arrondissement to the posh vignettes staged at New York's International Fine Arts and Antique Fair, collectors and designers alike are drawn to the bountiful offerings laid out for discovery at events worldwide. There, the keenest eyes seek out the most stunning prizes – selections based on the most basic of common elements rather than any one specific period or designated style. From French gilded chairs to American glass



cabinets, the challenge lies not in finding pieces that simply speak but in curating them to sing in harmony.

Playing matchmaker to these pieces - the chandeliers, sofas and settees that at first glance seem to have little in common - is an enviable skill, a skill Bernd Goeckler of Bernd Goeckler Antiques has artfully mastered. Credited as the designer for many of the spaces that showcase his business's fabulous finds; Goeckler's work is elegant and eclectic, a show-stopping testament to form and function.

"The most important elements in any piece are always the shape, the quality and the function," explains Goeckler, describing how he selects the vintage treasures and antiques destined to come together within a given space. "The designs reflect my personal style... but my personal style changes and evolves. What remains consistent throughout are the main characteristics of each piece. The core elements. When those elements offer beauty in both form and function, my clients react".

React they do. During his twenty-three year history as one of Manhattan's most well respected antique purveyors, Bernd Goeckler has amassed a following that includes both private collectors as well as the biggest names in the design world. Traveling extensively, he meticulously fills his larder with

Opposite Page Left: Green Leather Cabinet by Jacques Adnet France, 1950s; Pair of Modernist Armchairs by André Sornay, France, ca. 1937; Adjustable Center Table by André Sornay, France, 1950s; Chandelier by Max Ingrand for Fontana Arte Italy, 1950s; Floor Lamp by Pietro Chiesa for Fontana Arte, Italy, 1930s; Sconces by Max Ingrand for Fontana Arte, Italy, ca. 1960; Two Candlesticks by Max Ingrand for Fontana Arte, Italy, ca. 1960; Three Glass Vases by Franco Deboni, Italy, Contemporary

Opposite Page Right: Low Rectangular Table - Giltwood and Marble; Armand Albert Rateau, signed and numbered, France, ca. 1920. Presented on the table: Vases by Franco Deboni, Italy, 2005; Silver Dish by Harold Nielsen for Jensen, Denmark, 1930s; Pair of Bergeres by Jules Leleu, France, ca. 1940; Black Leather Screen by Jacques Adnet, France, ca. 1950; Akan Stool, Ghana, ca. 1900; Chandelier by André Arbus for Veronese, France, ca. 1940; Torchere, Seguso, Italy, ca. 1940 and "Orgue" Vase by Gio Ponti for Christoffle, France, 1950s

Left: Lacquer Doors by Pierre Dunand, France, 1950s; Glass Ceiling Lights by Seguso Vetri d'Arte, Italy, ca. 1954; Sideboard in Parchment by Jacques Adnet, France, 1940s; Coffee Table by Paul Evans and Phil Powell, USA, 1960s; One of a Pair of Pedestals by André Sornay, France, ca. 1940; Occasional Table by Osvaldo Borsani, Techno Edition, Italy, 1950s; One of a Pair of Illuminated Onyx Side Tables by Tommaso Barbi, Italy, ca. 1965; Petrified Wood Column; One of a Pair of Armchairs, Italy, 1950s; Africanist Stool by Francisque Chaleyssin, France, ca. 1930; "Thebes" Table Lamp by Maison Charles, France, ca. 1970; Ceramics by Axel Salto, Denmark, 1950s and Glass Vase by Franco Deboni; Italy, 2010

the coveted pieces that have what it takes to elicit emotional response from his clients. "Over the past ten years especially; we have seen a greater appreciation for pieces that are signed, that have provenance. They are pieces of art, really. Our clients build collections from these pieces that are a part of their lives. They can be used and lived in, not simply admired for aesthetics".

Among the enviable, myriad riches to be found in Goeckler's shop; it is perhaps the chandeliers and lamps that prove to be the most breathtakingly lovely and most widely transitional. Inspiring and dramatic, these statement pieces have an enigmatic quality that is at once modern and classic. Among the splendid offerings are a signed, mid-century modern, French floor lamp by Maison Charles and a stunningly dramatic chandelier by Gino Sarfatti. The former a curvaceous steel sculpture sleek enough to please the most staunchly minimalist client yet with a poetic grace that could easily lend itself to the most classical of rooms, the later an extraordinary, twenty-four arm beauty whose striking good looks could illuminate a formal salon or a rustic retreat with equal aplomb.

Why do eclectic designs seem to work so well? One could argue it's the exquisite balance of a classic beauty that is inspired by the past, yet completely comfortable in the modern world. If only all marriages could be so successful.