

CLASSIC DRIVER



Phillips to auction famous furniture designers' work in New York

04 June 2015 | Jan Baedeker

It's not only classic cars and timepieces achieving record prices at auction – vintage furniture is muscling in on the act, too. At Phillips' Design Sale in New York on 9 June 2015, some exceptional pieces will go under the hammer. We've had a look through the catalogue...

Eames, Jacobsen, Panton, Prouvé – never before have the masters of mid-century design enjoyed such popularity. And the same can be said of their furniture. But above the 'vintage mass market', where large numbers of glassfibre chairs and the like change hands, there is a scene of sophistication, reserved for the wealthiest collectors and the most important pieces from 19th and 20th Century design. [Phillips](#) is one of the auction houses specialising in this exclusive market; its next 'Design Sale' will take place on 9 June, in New York.

Eccentric pieces



A browse of the catalogue and we quickly became immersed in a world of art and design, of furniture and sculpture. And, once again, the auction specialists have managed to track down some very special pieces. The star lots are two pairs of chairs: the teal 'Ambassador' duo was designed by Jean Royère around 1955, and is estimated at 220,000 to 280,000 US dollars. The two dark green mohair rolled armchairs from the 1950s, complete with beech wood feet, were designed by Carlo Mollino and once stood in Acotto House in Turin. They are estimated to fetch between 180,000 and 240,000 dollars. Significantly older, yet unquestionably modern for its time, is the black cabinet of Edward William Godwin, dating back to the 1870s. It was most likely made at Collinson & Lock in London, and has been given an estimate of 80,000 to 120,000 dollars.

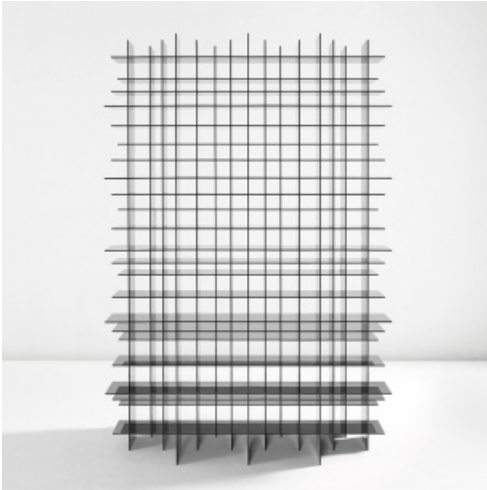
The blurred line between art and design



Among the more unusual items are Poul Henningsens' Grand Piano, made from steel and Plexiglass (dated around 1931 and estimated at 80,000-120,000 dollars), and Serge Mouille's sculptural glass table, 'Vrille' (circa 1962, estimated at 80,000-120,000 dollars). Furthermore, the line between

design and art is blurred, with Japanese designer Nendo's acrylic work from his 'Scatter Shelf' series (though they are seldom used as such).

Our favourites



Our favourites from the catalogue include Arne Jacobsen's lounge chair, 'The Ox', designed by Danish artist Fritz Hansen (35,000-45,000 dollars), and Hans J. Wegner's elegant swivel chair (circa 1955, 15,000-20,000 dollars). Charlotte Perriant's mahogany bench also took our eye, and for good reason - it was designed in 1958 for the Cité Cansado Mauritania. That or Gianfranco Frattini's lime green armchair trio would make this Classic Driver writer very happy indeed.

Conflicting interests



In fact we'd take issue with no piece, but we suspect our publishers might object to Gio Ponti's daybed, built as a prototype for the 'Casa Adatta' in Milan in the early 1970s (6,000-8,000 dollars), sitting in the Classic Driver office.

<https://www.classicdriver.com/en/article/design-furniture/phillips-auction-famous-furniture-designers-work-new-york>

© Classic Driver. All rights reserved.