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YOUTH MOVEMENT *Life imitates art* at PULP GALERIE, an appointment-only
apartment-showroom and one of the most intriguing addresses in PARIS.

By FREYA HERRING Photographed by ALEXIS NARADTZEKY



These pages in this Paris design gallery, Boa sofa by Fernando and Humberto Campana for Edra; Tankette coffee table by Paolo Pallucco and Mireille Rivier for Pallucco Roma; XM2 bookshelf by Xavier Matégot for Farjon; Milo floor lamp by Alessandro Mendini for Segno; LS134 pendant light by Carlo Nason for Mazzega; *L'été* (1958) artwork by Jean Souverbie.



This page in the living area, DS-1025 sofa by Ubaldo Klug for De Sede; Cipriani bar by Alessandro Mendini for Memphis Milano; Nilla Rosa screen by Mario Botta for Alias; Zefiro pendant light by Mario Botta for Artemide. *Opposite page* in another view of the living area, Tawaraya Ring boxing ring by Masanori Umeda for Memphis Milano.





There's a cultural assumption that members of Gen Z do most of their work online, vehemently shun phone calls and generally avoid physical interaction at all costs. But that isn't the approach that mid-20-year-olds Paul Ménacer-Poussin and Paul-Louis Betto took when starting their design gallery. In order to curate their ever-changing collection of furniture, the pair don't rely on sites like 1stDibs and eBay — they meet collectors in person, often at their homes in Italy, Switzerland, Germany and France, intent on building relationships, one on one. It's time-consuming, even old-fashioned, but it's working. Their business, Pulp Galerie in the ninth arrondissement, has become one of the hottest design spots in Paris.

"You shake hands, you look them in the eyes, and you bring them a bottle of red wine," Ménacer-Poussin says. "If you do that then you can be sure that the next time they have an exclusive piece, they will promise it to you before anyone else." This method also allows for impromptu opportunity. "You enter the house of a collector and there are lots of other things you can buy. In the beginning we did it like that because we didn't have money for shipping, but we have continued because it's the best way to get exclusive furniture that is unseen on the market."

Another thing that sets Pulp Galerie apart is its setting. The space is a 180-square-metre, three-bedroom unit on the fourth floor of a Haussmannian apartment block, and Ménacer-Poussin and Betto actually live there, occupying two bedrooms, with the third displaying bedroom furniture for the gallery. The address is top secret, with clients accessing the space by appointment only. What they enter into, however, is by no means your average twentysomething's bachelor pad — last night's ashtrays there are not. Instead, clients experience furniture that wouldn't be out of place in The Centre Pompidou — indeed, a recent piece, Gaetano Pesce's melting, biomorphic Pratt chair n.7 (1984) was actually exhibited there in 1996, and it won Pulp Galerie the Best Historical Design Object award at Design Miami.Basel this year.

It's furniture like this — sensual, tactile, radical — that Pulp Galerie specialises in. The gallery is slinking off the serene, mid-century lens that has dominated design for so long, and instead jumps head-first into the hedonistic '80s, exhibiting furniture from around 1980 until 2000. "In this period furniture began to be thought of more as sculpture than furniture," Ménacer-Poussin says. "Designers started to sell, not in furniture shops, but in galleries. That's why we love it — the creation is more free because the question of function has been put away. Form above function: that's our motto."

So sofas appear to tumble down onto themselves, as with Ubald Klug's DS-1025 Terrazza sofa. There is Paolo Pallucco and Mireille Rivier's 1987 Tankette, an epoxy-coated steel-and-aluminium coffee table reminiscent of a sanitised tank tread. The legs of Yves de la Tour d'Auvergne's 1994 Ellipse Pise table stand like wayward crystals supporting the hefty weight of its glass top as if by some sort of evolutionary sorcery.

Ménacer-Poussin and Betto buy furniture based on their own taste rather than their knowledge of design history. "We only buy furniture that we really love," Ménacer-Poussin states. "And because we present it in the rooms of our flat — in the living room, dining room and bedroom — we need to buy things that work well together."

Their next move is a showing of German Cold War furniture, particularly that of the Cologne-based Pentagon Group. And while there are plans to open a more accessible, ground-floor gallery on the Left Bank, there are none to close the apartment gallery — it is working too well. Besides, this way they can live in a home peppered with world-class design pieces, and why would they want to change that? "We use it every day like a normal apartment. We sit in the sitting room, we dine in the dining room, we have dinner parties; we use it naturally," Ménacer-Poussin reveals. "When we buy furniture for the gallery we also buy it to live with it. We know the experience of sitting on the chair and of using the table, and we love them more because of that." ■ pulpgalerie.com

These pages in the dining room, Tavolone **table** and Broadway **chairs** and **armchairs** by Gaetano Pesce; Side 1 **cabinet** by Shiro Kuramata for Cappellini; Buenos Aires **floor lamp** by Aldo Cibic and Cesare Ongaro for Memphis Milano; *Flying Carpet Rescue Team* (2020) **artwork** by Oh de Laval.



