

FINANCIAL TIMES

HTSI

22 MARCH
2025

18-PAGE
PROPERTY SPECIAL
INSIDE

A bigger splash

When Danish design hits Puglia

PLUS — INSIDE CARTIER'S V&A BLOCKBUSTER, DECODING MAGA BEAUTY, HOW TO TRAIN A TRICKY DOG, THE SUITE LIFE OF AXEL VERVOORDT

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HTSI

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FT.COM/NEWSLETTERS

EDITORIAL ENQUIRIES 020-7873 3203
ADVERTISING ENQUIRIES 020-7873 4208
HTSI magazine is printed by Walstead Group for, and published by The Financial Times Ltd, Bracken House, 1 Finsbury Street, London EC4M 9BT
ORIGINATION BY Dexter Premedia

Right: *Untitled* (Pure Crimson Butterfly 43.27), 2012, by Mark Grotjahn (just seen) on the wall in Patrick Seguin's apartment in Paris (page 60)

T

he happy coupling of a Danish design quartet and a palazzo in Puglia makes for one of the most pleasing interiors stories I've seen in a while. Our cover story this week takes us to

Villa Colucci, recently unveiled after a lengthy restoration by Rolf and Mette Hay, of the design company Hay, and Barbara "Bibi" Husted Werner and her award-winning film director husband Martin Werner. Friends for the past eight years, the couples decided on this joint venture having co-purchased the villa in 2021. I personally cannot imagine any circumstance in which I would trust the outcome of such a plan, but between them the Hay-Werners have overseen a fabulous refurbishment.

Both couples enjoy colour, and were keen to preserve the building's more ancient charms, but they have also made bold choices in their choice of art and furniture. It manages both to look spectacular and retain a simple barefoot beauty. As Martin says: "We didn't want it to look perfect, we wanted it to feel lived in." Scarlett Conlon enjoys a first viewing of the property as they describe their "shared approach" (page 48).

It sets the template for an issue in which we look at new ways to live luxuriously, especially in our property portfolio. If I coveted the chequered pool and floral-frescoed ceilings of Villa Colucci, I was positively green-eyed with envy on seeing the restorations going on in the Hebrides. A notoriously challenging place to build, the island region of west Scotland has a precipitously low population and an ever-dwindling supply of local talent. Now, a new generation of builders, interior designers and incomers are hoping to buck this trend. Charlotte Sinclair made the trip to the isles of Harris, Mull and Skye to meet the homeowners working with indigenous materials and techniques to preserve and evolve some of the cottages and buildings (page 56). The results are a gorgeous confluence of history, wood-clad comfort and majestic views. I defy you not to check out the local listings.

The gallerist Patrick Seguin has been investing in 20th-century furniture since 1989, the year he opened his namesake gallery in Paris. Throughout the intervening decades he has built up one of the world's most authoritative collections including, in particular, works by Jean Prouvé. Many of the pieces now decorate his apartment in the



I'M INTRIGUED TO SEE WHAT SEGUIN HAS STASHED IN HIS WAREHOUSE

Marais where, he explains, they work in dialogue with art, design and architecture: "Our house is designed as a canvas for this interaction." Though I'm no expert in any of these fields, the combination of a "creaky" 17th-century space, Alexander Calder sculptures and Prouvé's Standard chairs makes for a rather delicious conversation. Seguin opens up his home for us to have a poke around – I'm now intrigued to see what he's got stashed in his warehouse space in Nancy, not to mention the 185 acres in the south of France where he's "nestled" seven of Prouvé's Demountable Houses (page 60).

As I write, the final touches are being applied to the upcoming Cartier exhibition at the V&A museum, the first about the jewellery house to have been mounted in the UK for nearly three decades. Since its treasures are too numerous to list in their entirety, we asked Nick Foulkes to focus instead on the story of one of its most enduring motifs, the panther, about which he delivers a sparkling history (page 36). Keen-eyed viewers of the Academy Awards earlier this month will have seen the Panthère languishing around the neck of Oscar-winner Zoe Saldana or pawing at the hands of Timothée Chalamet. Hard to imagine the lucky cat was first conceived in 1914: it's still purrfect more than a century later. ■HTSI

📧 @jellison22

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Signature



PANTHÈRE DE CARTIER RING, £7,250 (PAGE 36)

PROPERTY SPECIAL



Patrick Seguin's apartment in Paris, with Library table, c1955-56, by Pierre Jeanneret, Métropole No 305 chairs, c1950, and Cité armchair, c1933, all by Jean Prouvé, Nuage bookshelves, 1958, by Charlotte Perriand, and Guns, 1961-82, by Andy Warhol (between the windows)

A FRESH perspective

New ways to live luxuriously

A COLLECTOR'S PARADISE IN PARIS — MODERN HOMES IN THE HEBRIDES — THE HNW GOES OFF-GRID



"I love Jean Royère almost as much as Prouvé – the red sofa and chairs in the living room are by Royère. Finding these pieces is my passion, my business and my life, and when I look into my future, I see no retirement because I know that with good health I will still be doing this to my last minute. One piece of art I know I will own one day is a Christopher Wool – that is missing from my collection."

LIVING Prouvé

Furniture gallerist Patrick Seguin has filled his Paris apartment with the 20th-century pieces he sells. He explains why they are the perfect “anchor” for contemporary art. As told to *Jackie Daly*

Photography by *Matthieu Salvaing*

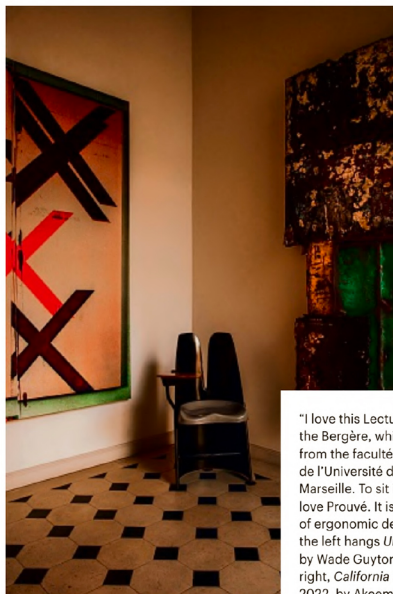


My wife Laurence and I have been together for 37 years: we opened our Paris gallery Galerie Patrick Seguin, which specialises in 20th-century furniture by French architects, in 1989. We've been in this apartment in the Marais for about 16 years. The building dates back to 1610, with beautiful architecture reminiscent of the Place des Vosges, and a small garden that we use in summer and winter. We have high ceilings and wooden floors – the one in the living room is original, from the 17th century. We like patina, things with age, and also that the floors here are sometimes creaky. Our passion is to show the dialogue between art, architecture and design, and our house is designed as a canvas for this interaction.

At Galerie Patrick Seguin we have concentrated on five names: Jean Prouvé, Jean Royère, Charlotte Perriand, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret. Our main passion is Prouvé, because he was a friend to artists, and many of the pieces in our home are testament to this. The Alexander Calder sculpture on the table beside the French doors in the living room was a gift from Calder to Prouvé. They became friends in the early 1950s and regularly exchanged ideas about sculpture and architecture. I have

Patrick Seguin at home in Paris. Behind him hangs *Tina Freeman*, 1975, by Andy Warhol. Ours Polaire sofa and armchair, c1947, both by Jean Royère. Guérison Bas table, 1952, and Swing-Jib lamp, 1952, both by Jean Prouvé. Stools, c1955, by Charlotte Perriand. Top right: *Runaway Nurse #3*, 2007-08, by Richard Prince. On the table, 1952, by Perriand, sits *Saché*, 1974, by Alexander Calder

PHOTOGRAPHS: © 2025 CALDER FOUNDATION, NEW YORK / DACS, LONDON. © 2025 THE ANDY WARHOL FOUNDATION FOR THE VISUAL ARTS, INC./LICENSED BY DACS, LONDON. © RICHARD PRINCE



"I love this Lecture Hall chair, the Bergère, which came from the faculté de droit de l'Université d'Aix-Marseille. To sit in it is to love Prouvé. It is a precursor of ergonomic design. On the left hangs *Untitled*, 2023, by Wade Guyton; on the right, *California California*, 2022, by Akeem Smith."

some of their correspondence in my office: one is a letter to Prouvé requesting the engineering of a base for one of Calder's artworks. There are two arrows on the letter, and the space between them illustrates the exact thickness he wanted the steel.

Laurence and I discovered Prouvé in the late '80s, when we bought a Standard chair and Compass table from the Saint-Ouen flea market. We were instantly hooked. There was a long economic recession in Europe, and in 1992 we went to the refectory at the Cité Internationale Universitaire in Paris and bought 454 chairs and 87 Compass tables being sold by the French administration. We tried to convince our friends and the few collectors we had then to buy 10 chairs for 1,000 francs [about £120] each, without much success [an original now can cost from around £20,000]. Early on, I understood how important it was to keep pieces – to create an inventory.

Prouvé is a wonderful anchor for art. He embodies a kind of minimalism that is not a fit for everyone, but when you put his work together with contemporary art an alchemy occurs between them. I started to collect contemporary art in the late '80s, mesmerised by Warhol, Basquiat and Calder. Sadly, I never got to meet those artists, but have been lucky enough to forge amazing relationships with others. There's been Damien Hirst, but I also established relationships with Cy Twombly, Richard Prince and Mark Grotjahn. Since then there's also been Rudolf Stingel and Jonas Wood, among others. Their art is here, all around us. We are surrounded by friends. And Damien, Stingel, Grotjahn and Wood all have a passion for Prouvé and collect his furniture.

Design also anchors the art in our apartment. So often we see beautiful houses with extraordinary art but the furniture lets them down, as it's not the same level. Chairs are the portal to Prouvé's work and the Standard chairs [also known as the Métropole 305 design] around our dining table tell you everything you need to know about his concept. The frame is 1.5mm of bent steel and the back legs are hollow to distribute the stress of weight throughout the floor. Prouvé was a great engineer. He applied technology from aviation and the motor industries to construct furniture and architecture. I love the Swing-Jib lamp in our living room for the same reason. It pivots from one side to the other at exactly 180 degrees and has small wings with rubber in case it touches the wall. It is sublime.

WHEN YOU PAIR PROUVÉ'S WORK WITH CONTEMPORARY ART AN ALCHEMY OCCURS



Library table, c1955-6, by Pierre Jeanneret, with Métropole chairs, c1950, and Cité armchair, c1933, all by Jean Prouvé. Nuages bookshelves, 1938, by Charlotte Perriand. On the wall hangs *Orange Maxima*, 2012, by Kate Lowman. Below: vintage art books by Richard Prince, Andy Warhol and Ed Ruscha

Laurence and I are always moving pieces around the place, particularly the art. We live with a lot of Prouvé pieces in Paris, but there are more in our new house, built for us by the architect Jean Nouvel in the south of France. (I've known Jean for 40 years, he designed our gallery, and I'm godfather to his daughter.) We also have pieces in storage, including in a warehouse in Nancy, where Prouvé was born, because if we kept them at home we wouldn't be able to move. Many are large architectural artefacts, such as his porthole doors. I also collect his Demountable Houses [prefab homes designed to house displaced people after the second world war]. We have 185 acres in the south of France and we've nestled seven Demountable Houses on the hill. Thirty years ago, when I first started buying Prouvé's houses, people said to me: "Do you want to live in a barrack?" They didn't understand, but it was the cabin of our dreams. One of the prototypes took more than 10 years to restore. They were built for emergencies or for schools in rural areas, the components shipped on site and mostly built in one day. Prouvé was way ahead of his time promoting an architecture that left no trace on the landscape.

Sometimes we rotate the furniture and bring pieces out of storage. The two '40s Visiteur armchairs beside the bookshelf are recent additions. The only art that will never move is the Warhol painting of Tina Freeman in the living room. I bought it 25 years ago and it's the heart of our apartment. It's so much more complex than people think: the silk screening overlays his painting. I first saw it in a gallery in Cologne; it took me five years to buy – the price kept going up, it was always just out of reach. My

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Right: Visiteur FV11 armchair (far right), c1947, Guérison Bas low table, 1952, and Direction No 353 swivelling armchair (behind desk), 1951, all by Jean Prouvé. The cabinet, 1958, and stools (far right), c1955, are by Charlotte Perriand. The desk, 1948, and swivelling armchair (in front of desk), 1948, are both by Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret. Cube stool (under mantelpiece), 1956-59, by Le Corbusier. Desk lamp and floor lamp (far right), both by Serge Mouille. Untitled (Pure Crimson Butterfly 43.27) (above mantelpiece), 2012, by Mark Grotjahn. Paintings and gouaches (four small frames on wall above radiator) by Dike Blair. *Psychodelic Soul* Stick (on floor in far left corner), 2001, by Jim Lambie. *Methy* Viologien, 1997, by Damien Hirst. Portrait of Nick Cave (right of door), 1996, by Richard Kern



prospective brain was always searching for art, and it's magnificent. We have other masters too. The painting on the opposite wall is Richard Prince's *Runaway Nurse* and there are three Basquiat drawings adjacent to that. Even now I spend hours looking at them.

My office is my sanctuary. I am surrounded by all the things I love – it's a distillation of our lives. Among the photographs is one of our daughter Pauline, who has her own contemporary gallery in Berlin called Heidi, and there is a certificate with the medals I received when

I was awarded Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres (2018), then Officier (2023), by the French Ministry of Culture. Both make us very proud.

I love paper. I don't own a computer, I read a newspaper every day and some of my most cherished collections are documents, including correspondence between Mr Brâncuși and Prouvé from 1927 proposing Prouvé's atelier produce a steel cast test for Brâncuși's 50m *Oiseau dans l'espace*, a sculpture intended for the garden of Villa Noailles. I also have a very special document marked 493 of 750 from 1971: part of the paperwork for the competition to design the Centre Pompidou.

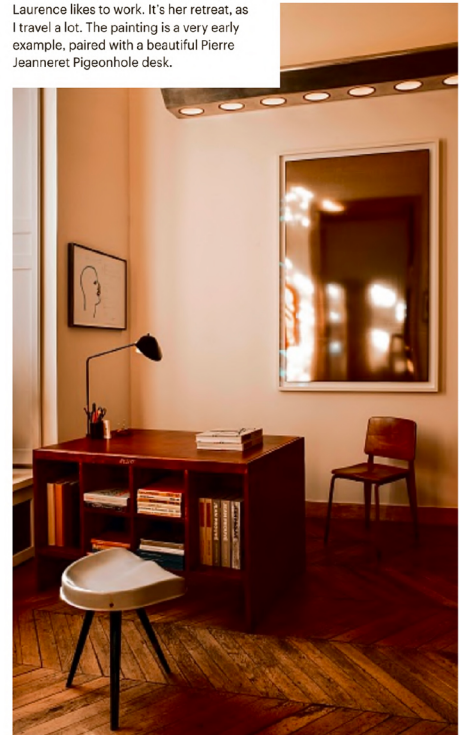
Prouvé was the chairman of the competition and supported these two young architects Renzo Piano and Richard Rogers. No one in Paris wanted their building, but thankfully this guy from Nancy was a visionary.

Some of my favourite things are displayed on a table below our Jonas Wood painting. There's an invitation-catalogue to the Andy Warhol exhibition from 1967 marked "Dossier 2357 for *Thirteen Most Wanted Men*". You can imagine the excitement it ignited just looking at it! Among the vintage books is *The Catcher in the Rye*, not by Salinger but Richard Prince – his controversial reproduction of Salinger's first edition from 1911. He dedicated this one to me. All the ephemera is personal, sentimental. I also have a Richard Prince book for his show at my gallery in 2008. He's written inside: "Patrick and Laurence. Happy Wedding Day!" There's also a very rare book by Stingel, the most conceptual book you will ever read – on DIY – which was published to coincide with his first exhibition in 1989 at the Massimo de Carlo Gallery. It's genius.

People often ask me how to start a collection. I tell them, start with books and learn – start with paper! But you must also have passion. There is a quote by Robert Filliou that sums up why Laurence and I have dedicated our lives to collecting. He said: "Art is what makes life better than art." That's our philosophy. ■ HTSI

A Passion For Jean Prouvé: From Furniture to Architecture is published in April by Galerie Patrick Seguin at €190

One of the first pieces of art we bought is the Bruce Nauman painting [below, above the lamp] in the small office where Laurence likes to work. It's her retreat, as I travel a lot. The painting is a very early example, paired with a beautiful Pierre Jeanneret Pigeonhole desk.



The bedroom opens up to the garden and we have the view all the way down it, which is wonderful. We fling open the doors and enjoy it. We have a great Damien [Hirst] in there – which we chose because of the garden. It frames a very rare Prouvé stool and his famous daybed, which came from Antony University.

Left: No 450 Antony daybed, 1953, and No 307 stool, 1951, both by Jean Prouvé. Wall fixture, 1955, and floor lamp, 1953, both by Serge Mouille. On the wall hangs *Momentary Love Blossom*, 2016, by Damien Hirst. Right: ramp with lamps (above mirror painting), 1954, No 4 chair, 1934, and No 306 stool, 1952, all by Prouvé. Pigeonhole desk, c1957-58, by Pierre Jeanneret. Desk lamp by Serge Mouille. On the wall hangs (left) *Eating Buggers III*, 1985, by Bruce Nauman, and (right) *Shift/Rise #19*, 2011, by Liz Deschenes