

domus

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Jean Royère

By Staff Writer



Jean Royère, view of the exhibition at Galerie Patrick Seguin

Galerie Patrick Seguin shows in London Royère's childlike taste for freedom, his nonchalance and irreverence that meant he never lapsed into the bourgeois "good taste".

Jean Royère was one of the leading figures in French design from his very first project – garden furniture – in 1931 until his definitive retirement in 1972.

Those four decades saw the worldwide shift towards the modern; and Royère, bestriding two epochs – from the prewar years to the economic boom and prosperity of postwar reconstruction – traversed the aesthetic climate of his time as strikingly and dazzlingly as a comet.

Self-taught, he always remained a free agent. Quick, intuitive, intelligent and pragmatic, he was also remarkably inventive, as his work makes crystal clear: there is sheer jubilation in the way he mapped out his own world – a childlike taste for freedom, a nonchalance and an irreverence that meant he never lapsed into the bourgeois "good taste" that trapped so many of his contemporaries. At the root of all this was the meticulous, nothing-but-the-best know-how he had picked up in the cabinet-making workshops of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine; and with Gouffé, the design and decoration firm in the same neighborhood, where they made copies of old pieces and French period furniture in particular.

Royère came up with a style that was his and nobody else's. A style his period adopted naturally and spontaneously, falling under the spell of his smooth, organic shapes, his supple, pared-down, graphic line, his unconventional color associations. Like a couturier, Royère dressed his time, inventing the decor for a modern lifestyle to be effortlessly, harmoniously lived in an elegant, gracious and somewhat zany setting.

Until April 23, 2016
Jean Royère
Galerie Patrick Seguin
45–47 Brook Street, London



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