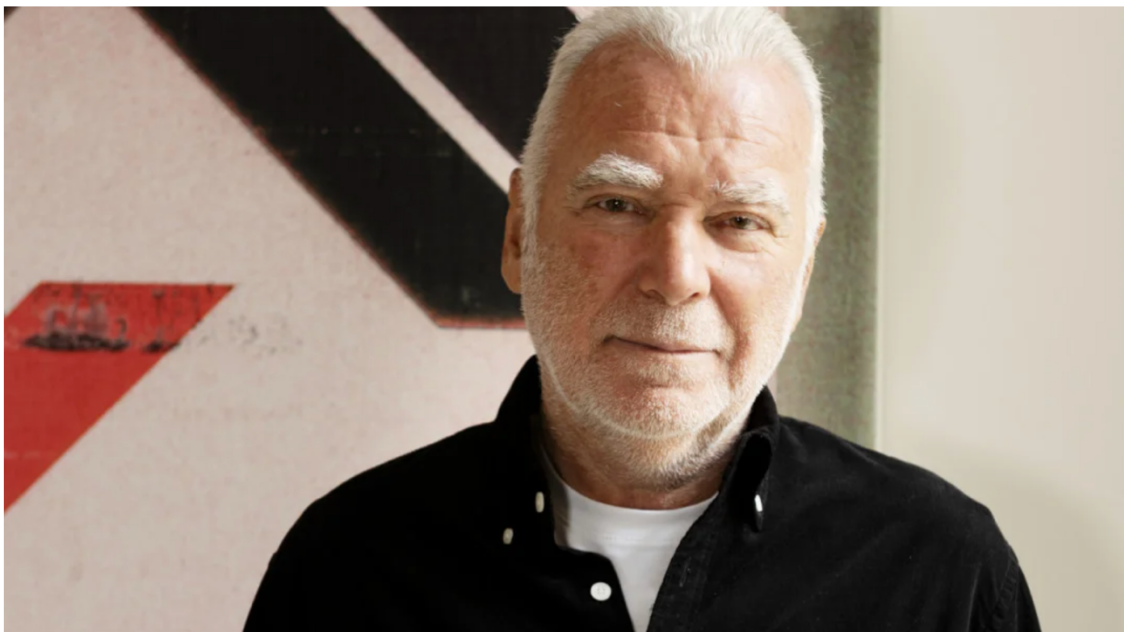




HOMES | ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN

A legendary figure: Patrick Seguin on leaving a legacy in the world of vintage furniture

By Jet Acuzar | Aug 26, 2025



COVER Vintage furniture pioneer Patrick Seguin in his Paris apartment in front of Wade Guyton, Untitled, 2023

Arguably one of the most important furniture galleries of our era, Galerie Patrick Seguin has mounted some of the most important and influential 20th century architect-designed furniture exhibitions. Its owner, Patrick Seguin, is considered the foremost expert in the field and the pioneer in introducing to the contemporary world works by Jean Prouvé, Charlotte Perriand, Pierre Jeanneret, Le Corbusier and Jean Royere.

His name engenders the deepest respect in design circles. With prices fetching in the hundreds of thousands, and in some cases, millions, the gallery's extraordinary examples can be found in museums as well as collectors' homes. The lasting effect Seguin's work has had in design is evident in almost every home today, with countless original pieces he sourced becoming starting points of inspiration in the current landscape of furniture design.

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ABOVE Vintage furniture gallery owner and enthusiast Patrick Seguin in his Paris

Please share with us the beginnings of your career.

I grew up in a modest, rural environment in the south of France, far removed from the cultural world. Art entered in my later years. I began working at a young age in the hospitality and restaurant industry, first in the south and then in Paris, where I managed several nightclubs and met Laurence, my wife. I soon felt the desire to change my path, and together, we opened the gallery in the fall of 1989. The gallery quickly focused on the Fifties decorative arts, with Prouvé as a central figure.

Could you tell us why you chose to focus on this era of furniture?

We chose this era of furniture first and foremost out of a deep passion for the work of Prouvé, who, at the time, was far from enjoying the recognition he holds today. Our growing interest in his constructivist approach and functional design naturally led us to expand our appreciation of other key designers from the same period, with whom Prouvé had collaborated, such as Perriand, Jeanneret and Le Corbusier.



PHOTO 1 OF 5 Charlotte Perriand's Bibliothèque murale, an example of the elegance that vintage furniture embodies

How and why did you choose the furniture of these specific designers?

Discovering Prouvé's creations was a revelation, both aesthetically and ideologically. I was captivated by his social commitment, innovative use of materials and ability to combine form and function. This admiration quickly turned into a quest that would define my life, dedicating me to study, collect and preserve Prouvé's legacy with great rigor and enthusiasm. My approach to selecting furniture is guided by a strong commitment to authenticity. Particular attention is paid to the provenance, history of use and patina of each piece, all of which are essential elements that testify to its originality and cultural significance. I appreciate pieces that bear the marks of time and use.

How did you begin finding the pieces?

I discovered Prouvé's work in the late 1980s at the Saint Ouen flea market, where a Compass table and Standard chairs caught my eye. I was struck by their structural clarity and graphic strength; it was a real revelation that sparked my passion. I quickly developed a methodical approach: researching archives, tracking institutional commissions and searching for original pieces in situ. A memorable moment came in the early Nineties, when we identified, through archival documents, a large commission of Prouvé furniture for the Cité Universitaire in Paris. The institution was renovating its interiors and replacing its outdated furniture, and we were able to acquire all the furniture from the cafeteria: 454 chairs and 87 tables, a rare and decisive opportunity. It's a combination of instinct, research and fieldwork.

In case you missed it: Geometric tactility: inside Steven Tan's artful home



ABOVE Prouvé's 6x6 Demountable House by Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners, a prime example of vintage furniture design that endures amid a modern context



ABOVE The Calder | Prouvé exhibition of Galerie Patrick Seguin and Gagosian Gallery



ABOVE Charlotte Perriand's Bibliothèque murale, an example of the elegance that vintage furniture embodies

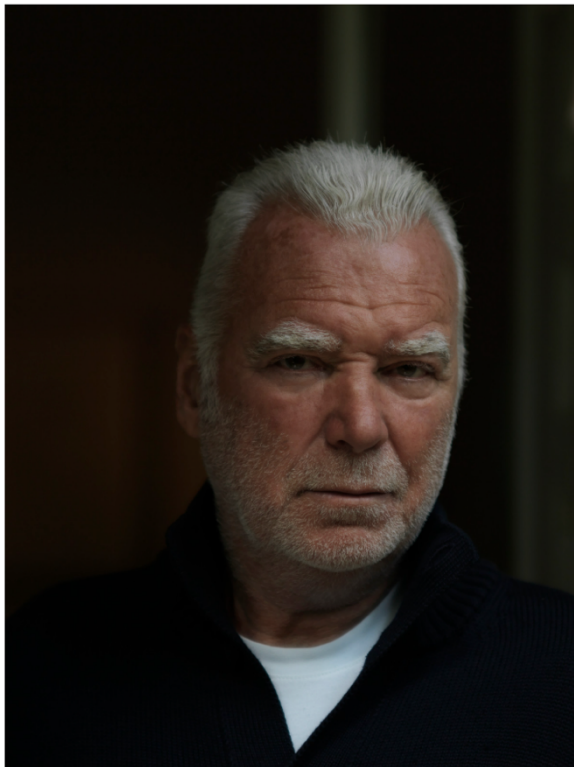
What is your favourite story about your experience in the industry?

From archives, I knew that Prouvé had installed demountable buildings on the site of his factory in Maxéville, in the suburbs of Nancy, which was disused before becoming a joint development zone. We went to the site to try to find traces or information about what had become of these buildings.

It took a little insight and persistence to finally find what we were looking for: a prototype of a Métropole house from 1948. Over the years and throughout the site's history, this small building had been transformed into a garage, an industrial bakery and finally a swingers' club called Le Bounty. Of course, the building was unrecognisable, as it had been completely covered and decorated. But luckily, this is what ultimately preserved it, as the structure was completely intact.

What do you most enjoy about your profession?

As Robert Filliou said, "Art is what makes life more interesting than art." I find constant inspiration in promoting Prouvé's work through exhibitions and new curatorial dialogues, and we are fortunate to work in a magnificent space— which I entrusted to my friend Jean Nouvel to design— that offers us great possibilities. I also enjoy organising exhibitions outside our walls, such as with the Gagosian Gallery, with whom we have collaborated more than ten times in France and the United States, including two remarkable exhibitions celebrating the connection between Prouvé and artists, Chamberlain Prouvé and Calder Prouvé. My latest collaboration is with AIG at ArtBasel Hong Kong, where a Prouvé house and furniture were presented alongside contemporary Asian artworks. It was very inspiring. I find the relationship between art, design and architecture particularly enriching. I derive great satisfaction from sharing my passion and contributing to the worldwide recognition of Jean Prouvé's work, also through the many books we publish and documentary films.



ABOVE Patrick Seguin, a pioneer in the field of vintage furniture



ABOVE View of the Galerie Patrick Seguin, home to some of the most notable pieces of vintage furniture in the world

Would you care to predict the future value of these pieces?

I remain pleasantly surprised by the strength of the collectables market, particularly with regard to the work of Prouvé. There is sustained interest in Prouvé's work, with growing appeal for his demountable architectural structures. In addition, sourcing difficulties and the scarcity of available items are contributing to a strong market.

Is this business environmentally sustainable?

Yes, this activity is inherently environmentally sustainable. Galerie Patrick Seguin sells exclusively vintage furniture, all of which are existing pieces that do not require any new industrial production. By preserving and re-contextualising these historic creations, the gallery promotes a thoughtful and circular approach to design collecting. This is even more evident in Prouvé's demountable structures. He said, "I want a structure that leaves no trace on the landscape." In addition to this ahead-of-its-time ecological thinking, he sought to rationalise the use of materials and their implementation as much as possible, precisely with sustainability in mind.



ABOVE Maxéville Design Office, which showcases a wide range of vintage furniture pieces



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Why are the works worth investing in?

These pieces are worth acquiring not only for their aesthetic value, but also for the rich dialogue they create with contemporary art and architecture. Collectors are drawn to the way Prouvé's furniture, in particular, fits naturally into modern environments, forming a dynamic synergy with contemporary artworks and spaces. Prouvé's work is pivotal in the creation of furniture. There is a before and after.

Beyond their visual appeal, many of these pieces are steeped in history. For example, the 6x6 demountable house was designed during the Second World War to be assembled in a single day by just three people, providing emergency housing for displaced families in the Lorraine region. It's part of our history with a capital H.