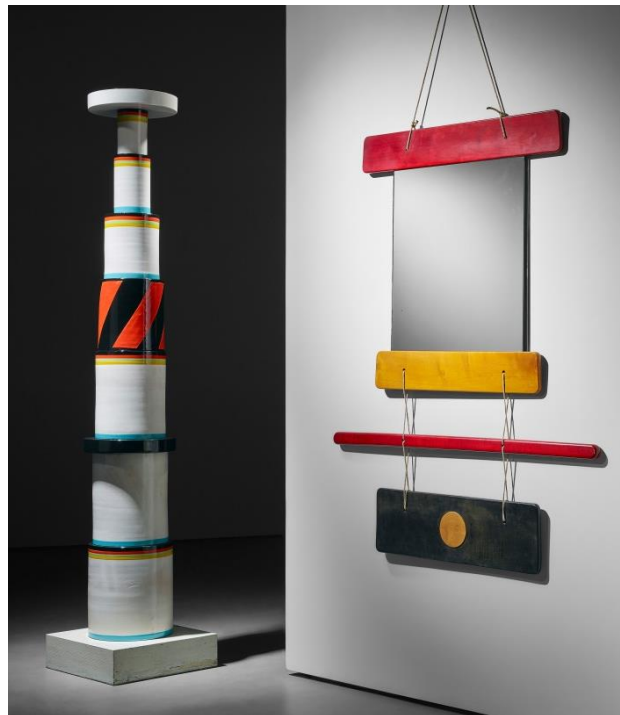


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PRESS RELEASE

Phillips Announces Highlights from the April Design Auction in London

Sale on 26 April to be Led by Modern Masters of Italian and French Design



Ettore Sottsass 1917-2007

Totem, no. 18, 1966 and Composizione di elementi di legno colorato e specchio, 1959
Estimates: £150,000-200,000 and £80,000-120,000

LONDON – 28 March 2018 – Phillips is pleased to offer works by the most respected designers from the past century, including Alberto Giacometti, Diego Giacometti, François-Xavier Lalanne, Jean-Michel Frank, Gio Ponti and Wendell Castle, among others in its first Design auction of 2018. A group of works by Ettore Sottsass are included in the sale, as well as ceramics by Hans Coper and Lucie Rie. Comprised of 171 lots, Important Design will take place on 26 April at Phillips London. As part of a unique collaborative project between Phillips and ARTinD, eight leading international architects have designed a silk carpet, taking inspiration from the Golden Section. The eight unique carpets will be exhibited during the Important Design preview, and sold online between 19 – 29 April.

A strong feature in the sale is a group of 16 works by Ettore Sottsass, who has lately garnered a great deal of attention, especially following the recent exhibition at the Met Breuer. Among the highlights are works in ceramic, including a *Totem, no. 18, 1966*, standing at two meters in height (*illustrated above*). Also included is a writing desk, his *Nefertiti* from 1968-1969, and *Composizione di elementi di legno colorato e specchio, 1959* (*illustrated above*). The wall piece, or mirror, is of particular relevance, referencing in its choice of composition his metal sculptures of the 1950's. This particular language remained part of his lexicon throughout his career and can be found in works designed some 50 years later. To coincide with PAD, several of these works are travelling to Paris to go on display at Phillips' Paris gallery on 46 Rue du Bac from 4 – 6 April.

The sale is led by Diego Giacometti's pair of *'Têtes de Lionnes'* armchairs, which have impeccable aristocratic provenance (*illustrated right*). These chairs represent one of the artist's most iconic designs. Diego conceived the present model armchair for Henrietta Vronsky-Asch, a friend of Alberto's, in 1970, four years after his beloved brother's untimely death. The two lion busts featured on each of the armchairs pay homage to the client, whose astrological sign was Leo. Following the first version of the armchair, which presented four evenly moulded feet, the second version was refined with front feet shaped as lion's paws, as illustrated in the present lot. The sale also includes Diego Giacometti's *'Toad'* table, circa 1976 (estimate: £220,000-280,000) and a *'Berceau'* low table, first version, designed circa 1963 (estimate: £80,000 - 120,000), as well as Alberto Giacometti's *'Tête de femme'* table lamp, designed 1937 (estimate: £120,000 - 180,000).



Diego Giacometti 1902-1985
Pair of 'Têtes de Lionnes' armchairs, second version,
 conceived 1979, executed 1979-1981
 Estimate: £250,000 - 350,000



Gio Ponti 1891-1979
Important and rare low table, designed for Contini Bonacossi,
Quadreria Moderna, Villa Vittoria, Florence, 1927
 Estimate: £180,000 - 240,000

Masters of Italian design include Gio Ponti, Gino Sarfatti, Ico Parisi and Piero Fornasetti. Gio Ponti's *low table*, with a striking *Rosso Fiorentino* marble top, was commissioned by Count Alessandro Contini Bonacossi and Erminia Vittoria Galli Feroldi for their home in Florence (*illustrated left*). Married in 1888, the couple worked to build an impressive art collection, leaving for frequent visits to New York and Latin America, and seizing the opportunity to acquire works by artists such as Bellini, Goya, El Greco, Veronese, Tintoretto, Bernini, Marini, Morandi, and many others. When they returned to Italy, they established residence at a 19th century villa built by Marquess Massimiliano Strozzi, which Alessandro renamed Villa Vittoria and was to house their art collection. The present lot is among the furnishings commissioned to architect Gio Ponti for the villa's *Quadreria moderna*, the modern painting gallery, a long hallway for which Ponti created six stools, four benches and two tables. For the *Quadreria*, Ponti adopted a neoclassical style inspired by ancient Rome. Of Ponti's works from this period, this commission stands out for its exceptional level of execution.

László Moholy-Nagy's 1946 chromium-plated brass desk set is the only known example of Moholy-Nagy's design to ever appear at auction. The desk set disappeared from public knowledge for decades, until 2013 when it was re-discovered in Wisconsin and subsequently included in the recent retrospective *Moholy-Nagy: Future Present*, which travelled to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, The Art Institute of Chicago, and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. It was in 1939 that Moholy-Nagy founded his own school - The School of Design in Chicago, which was reorganised in 1944 as The Institute of Design. Moholy-Nagy created this machine-age pen and letter holder while working as the artistic advisor to the Parker Pen Company, in an effort to raise funds for the school.



László Moholy-Nagy 1895-1946
 Prototype desk set, 1946
 Estimate: £60,000-80,000

Coming from a Belgian Private Collection is a standout work by François-Xavier Lalanne, 'Mouton', circa 1967 (*illustrated right*). Lalanne achieved significant recognition for his flock of sheep, titled *Pour Polyphème*, which he produced for the 1966 Salon de la Jeune Peinture exhibition. Combining the artist's humour with his love of the surreal, Lalanne intended these works to be used as furniture, creating a form that is both sculptural and functional and bringing art into one's everyday life. In reference to his exhibition, Lalanne commented: "I wanted to create something very invasive because if you show small objects no one notices them. You have to go in with something out of the ordinary and even somewhat embarrassing. If you come with a snail as big as a thumb, nobody notices you!"



François-Xavier Lalanne 1927-2008
 'Mouton', circa 1992
 Estimate: £150,000 - 200,000

Building on the success of American crafts in New York in December, *Important Design* brings together a celebration of the woodworking skills of the American East Coast, with highlights by Wendell Castle and Judy Kensley Mckie. Trained as a sculptor, Castle shifted his attention to furniture in 1963 whilst working on a stool originally conceived as a sculpture. As he often described when discussing his creative approach, Castle did not dissociate with either the role of designer and sculptor, as both aspects equally pertained in his work. Castle considered stack-laminated wood as 'the foundation of [his] art', abandoning the direct carving of a single timber for a less limiting creative process. The sofa offered here, made about a decade into Castle's investigations into the potential of stack lamination, is an excellent example of the style that helped define his career (*illustrated below left*). Where Wendell Castle began his career as a sculptor, Judy Kensley Mckie started as a painter. McKie is, above all, a creator of unforgettable images and her work strays far afield from the traditional preoccupations of furniture. Her designs are distinguished by their brilliant volumetric draftsmanship and the sheer wit of their conception. Leopard Couch (*illustrated below right*) ranks among McKie's most compelling conceptions. It is a very early example of her signature style and brings to the fore her real genius as a designer – her inexhaustible imagination.



Wendell Castle 1932-2018
 Unique three-seater sofa, 1974
 Estimate: £140,000 - 180,000



Judy Kensley Mckie b. 1944
 'Leopard Couch', 1983
 Estimate: £120,000 - 180,000

In a unique collaborative project between Phillips and ARTinD, eight international architects have designed a silk carpet as part of a project that explores the blurring traditional domains between art, craft and design. Ben Van Berkel, Peter Eisenman, Norman Foster, Sou Fujimoto, Thom Mayne, Alessandro Mendini, Piero and Nathalie Sartogo, and Peter Zumthor have all drawn inspiration from the Golden Section, in order to create a unique carpet. The sale of the eight resulting carpets will be hosted online (19 – 29 April), whilst being exhibited at 30 Berkeley Square over Phillips public sale preview.

Auction: Thursday, 26 April 2018, 2pm BST
Auction viewing: 19 - 26 April
Location: 30 Berkeley Square, London
Click [here](#) for more information.

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