

collecting design...

with Daniella Ohad Smith.



Pierre Cardin and the sleek '70s.

With the current buzz about 1970's aesthetics; furnishings by Verner Panton, Paul Evans and Maria Pergay have recently drawn intense interest by collectors of modern design. Throughout the '70s, designers experimented with new materials and innovative technologies, creating exciting furniture in the modern-baroque and minimalist tradition. Furniture of this era was typically made of brushed metals, plastic, Plexiglas and recycled materials.

The pieces were often upholstered with fake fur and synthetic fabrics in bright colors, manifesting a sophisticated and complex aesthetic that has now found its way back to the mainstream of home décor. In just a few years, furniture by select '70s designers has fetched five figures and up to the 100k range. For the collector interested in adding a piece of '70s furniture, the opportunities are becoming more and more rare. One of the greatest buys in the marketplace today is the work by French couturier Pierre Cardin. In the '70s, Pierre Cardin created chic, glamorous, cutting-edge furniture, crafted of rich lacquered woods and chrome veneers.

Most people recall Pierre Cardin's fame as a fashion designer, admired by such stars as Rita Hayworth and the Beatles. After launching his remarkable career in the postwar years, working for such legendary

couture houses as Schiaparelli and Christian Dior, he opened his own house in 1950. His signature style was synonymous with avant-garde, experimental fashion, where geometry and space age imagery predominated with sharp triangular skirts and pagoda shoulders. Among his most notable achievements was the advancement of unisex fashions, launching the first prêt-à-porter line and pioneering the licensing industry – turning his name into a brand for everything from perfume and pens to linens, luggage and hotels.

After buying the first stainless furniture line designed by Maria Pergay in 1968, Cardin turned his eye to furniture design. He launched his first line of furni-

a complete lifestyle, paving the way for designers Ralph Lauren and Giorgio Armani.

This month I'm pleased to introduce you to a fabulous dining set, made of stainless steel veneer by Cardin. It will be offered in the March sale of the Chicago-based auction house, Treadway-Toomey. With its sleek lines and '70s style, the set looks as if it was taken directly from a James Bond movie.

The set includes a bar cabinet, wall cabinet, dining table and six chairs, which likely sold for a very high price in the '70s. Today the auction estimate is from \$5,000-\$7000, a relative bargain because the market for Cardin furniture is still in its infancy. The set comes from the original collector and is



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ture in the '70s and named the collection *furniture sculptures* merging the sculptural with the functional. Each Cardin piece was signed, production was done in a limited edition and the furniture was very expensive. With his sophisticated, minimal and geometric furniture, Cardin's aesthetic defined

in excellent condition, adding to its value. For more information:
www.treadwaygallery.com

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