Maison Leleu, Ayala Serfaty, and Achille Salvagni Intermingle in Maison Gerard’s Booth at FOG Design+Art

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The entrypoint into Maison Gerard’s presentation at FOG Design+Art might be a glinting golden map of India, hung at the center of the far wall. The cast-bronze work, titled *If I Had Known Then What I Know Now: India* (2015), was made by the London-based studio Based Upon;
it looks as though a sheet of metal was cut and crumpled just so, poetically forming the shape of the India's bounds. While the rest of the booth spans a wide swathe of historic and contemporary design, the casual elegance that the wall-hung map reflects the tone of the surrounding designs.

With their inaugural showing at the young San Francisco fair, Maison Gerard emphasizes range. Spanning historic pieces from their archive, as well as pieces that are fresh from the designers’ studios, highlights include a signature light sculpture by Ayala Serfaty, a monumental bronze screen by Franck Chartrain, and a pair of bookcases by Maison Leleu (the timeless pieces were once part of the collection Pierre Frilet, a major Leleu patron).
Italian architect and designer Achille Salvagni is undoubtedly the start of the contemporary roster. New works by Salvagni headline the booth included a new version of his *Antinous Cabinet*, a limited edition of 6, whose sloping form of black marble, bronze, and parchment tells the story of Antinous, the Roman emperor Hadrian’s secret Greek lover. Salvagni represents this clandestine relationship in a subtle face on the bronze panel at the center of the credenza’s two doors. Also on view will be his sumptuous *Vittoria* chairs and ottomans (both 2015), whose lacquered bases echo the sheen of his marbled cabinetry.
Based Upon

*Fragmented Crack Blue*, 2015

Maison Gerard
Salvagni’s work will compete with the shiny exteriors of Based Upon, Chartrain, and Carol Egan’s bronze work. After showing them for the first time this fall, the gallery also shows Based Upon’s *Fragmented Crack Blue* (2015), a patinated bench that evokes the earth’s crust with its solid and paradoxically crumbling state. Thanks to their delicacy and polished exteriors, Egan’s twisted bronze stools are the perfect foil to *Fragmented Crack Blue*, which celebrates the material’s solidity rather than its flexibility. Chartrain, who is a *Compagnon du Devoir*—a prestigious French title given to expert craftsmen in who have completed extensive training and achieved mastery—puts his skills on display with a radiant engraved bronze screen. Titled *Astre Screen* (2008), it calls to mind Art Deco with its artful combination of patterns, decadent materials, and classic craftsmanship.
On the surfaces, vases by Japanese and French ceramists will bring the scale of the booth into a more domestic realm. Valerie Hermans’s simply scored bowls bring a rustic yet refined accent to the bronze works that make up the majority of the booth. Even Egan’s sculptural seats emphasize the fragility of Sakai Hiroshi’s vase. It’s these fine details and considered contrasts that makes the presentation a harmonious experience.

—Kat Herriman


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