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For right: Börje Lagergren.
Wood, metal, glass and lacquer. Mendelton cabinet
by Kari Kneck, £2,490.
Let us rewind to 2015 and the Tate Modern show devoted to the late French abstract artist Sonia Delaunay. Her vibrant paintings are drawing huge crowds, and among the throng, textile designer Pauline Mann is ecstatic. "To say the show blew me away is an understatement," she says. "I pretty much ran back to the studio and created Sonia [a hand-dyed and woven Raw wool rug, made to order, £2,160] as a purely intuitive response to her use of colour and pattern."

Cut to 2017 and interior designer Natalia Miyar is sitting at David Hockney's painting Beverly Goldholiner and Christopher Scott (1968-9) in Tate Britain's blockbuster retrospective. What intrigues her is a huge pink sofa. "I found it fascinating that the centrepiece of a space, masculine portrait of two men is actually an incredibly feminine upholstered in pink velvet," she says. "It's quite unusual and iconic and certainly one of the coolest sofas I've seen. I used the painting as inspiration for a new interpretation in smoky-blue velvet with more comfortable proportions [price on request, pictured overleaf]. I'm using this showstopper in a master bedroom and designing the room around it."

Fine art has long stimulated practical creativity - what is new, however, are the design and manufacturing technologies finessing the marriage of aesthetics with three-dimensional functionality. It's catapulting artists seeking an extra dimension for their work and to designers looking for inspiration. A case in point is Yinka Shonibare's Windy Chair (edition of three, £360,000). Earlier this year, the British-Nigerian artist - whose work is in the Tate collection, Smithsonian and New York's Museum of Modern Art - installed his Wind Sculpture in Central
Park, bemoaned with the bold batik textile pattern that has become a signature of his work. "The sculptures developed out of the sails in my piece Nelson's Ship in a Bottle, commissioned for Trafalgar Square in 2005," he says. "My art is usually autonomous — you can't do much with it — and I wanted to see if I could evolve that project into a cross between art and furniture. I did the drawings, matches for the design and worked with Carpenter Workshop Gallery to develop them into the Windy chair." The piece (pictured on final page with Wind Sculptures) is crafted from hand-painted aluminium, stainless steel and resin and is both functional and aesthetically engaging — it resembles a swathe of batik fabric unfurling in the breeze, just as Shonibare's sculptures do on a grander scale. "It's a piece of art when you're not sitting in it," he says.

Equally appealing as both furniture and artwork is the Letter series of tables by Dutch designer Reinier Bosch, referencing the comic-book style of Roy Lichtenstein's pop-art paintings. Bang ($18,000, pictured below) and Varoom ($21,000, each in an edition of 100) are crafted from mirror-polished stainless steel and Plexiglas, while tiny LED lights illuminate the letters. "Even though I use design language to convey my emotions, I find it interesting to play on verbal irony too," Bosch says. "The letters have their literal meaning, but are also aesthetic objects in their own right.

Finding an empathetic language that speaks to others also sparked Pinch Design's Alba furniture collection. "We discovered Ben Nicholson's sculptural relief work (1934) in St Ives. It has a chaly finish and we were struck by how calm it appeared, while a second, quieter rhythm was created by its lines and three-dimensional planes," says Pinch co-founder Oona Rannum. "That's completely our language — we've always been attracted to art or design with a tangible gentleness: there's a sense of something going on under the surface. Alba appears to be a random collection of squares and rectangles, applied in various thicknesses — it's striking yet has the same local beauty and sensibility as Ben Nicholson's work."

The collection includes a sidetable ($5,975, in oak; $6,140 in walnut or cherry, pictured on final page; bespoke sizes price on request) with lacquered relief-panel doors opening to reveal timber-lined interiors. "It's not needy — it's quietly confident," Rannum says.

In stark contrast, Dutch artist Piet Mondrian's punchy colour-blocked abstracts generate attention-demanding furniture — and the artist, widely recognised as the founder of the de Stijl art movement, is a constant source of inspiration for many designers. The late, great 20th-century furniture designer Eileen Gray channelled Mondrian when creating her linear De Stijl side table ($2,598). The piece graced Grey's own living room and is said to have been one of her favourite designs. Shiro Kuramata's Homage to Mondrian cabinets (from £10,227), designed for Italian manufacturer Cappellini in 1975, instantly recall his compositions and remain part of his collection, having been put into production in 2009, while Swiss manufacturer Rüthlisberger recently introduced a new edition of Koni Ochsenius's Mondrian cabinet (two styles, each in a signed edition of 20, example pictured on previous pages, £12,490).

This piece, originally designed in 1970, faithfully reiterates Mondrian's colours and space divisions while updating proportions for contemporary use. Creating three-dimensional forms from painted, figurative objects is challenging — but the results are breathtaking. The Salvador Dalí collection of furniture and lighting by Spanish manufacturer BD Barcelona remains faithful in every detail to the artist's paintings — gaining approval from the Gala Salvador Dalí Foundation. Its success lies in Dalí's friendship with the company's co-founder Óscar Tusquets Blanca. In 1972, Dalí appointed Tusquets as architect of the Mae West room at the Teatre-Museu in Figueres and tasked him with recreating his iconic "ipsi" paintings as a sofa (their design is not to be confused with Dalí's earlier collaboration with Edward James, producing just five pieces). A polyethylene version of the sofa for outdoor use ($2,131) remains a BD Barcelona bestseller.

Tuftpers was fascinated by Dalí's 1930s sketchbooks, and it was within these pages that he found drawings created for the furniture and interior designer from Michel Frank — and brought the Braque lamp (€6,180), with its gold-leaf zigzag pedestal, into production. He went on to recreate the surreal Leda chair (€25,358) and low table (€20,310) from Dalí's 1935 painting Femme à l'Île de Rozen (chair pictured overleaf with the painting). The feet of the three-legged polished cast-brass chair slip into high heels, while its curving backrest sweeps into a hand. A brushed brass table crowned by a Carrara marble egg makes a fittingly idiosyncratic companion.

Similarly, Dalí's surrealist majestically painted (1936) is the source of BD Barcelona's Vio-Vio de Cola loveseat (£33,677), which has built-in back upholstery in Schiaparelli pink and also exists as a limited edition black version (£38,766) of 105 pieces. Its sinuous backrest is trimmed with polished cast brass in the shape of an arm, which embraces those seated and merges into a feminine hand sporting a "bouffant" bracelet on one side and a masculine hand with a wristwatch on the other.

Tuftpers — appointed by Dalí as a Gala-Salvador Dalí Foundation life patron — still supervises each piece.
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Above: The Rug Company wool
Douille rug by Tricia Guild,
from £1,800, based on her
painting, Blue Square.

Below: Achille Castiglioni gold-
plated bronze and enameled
Bubbles wall sconce, €48,400,
Inspired by Jeff Koons

new Dali design (and more are in the
pipeline). "Dali painted or drew images
without needing to define materials or
measurements, and so for this process
needed to seek the advice of people close
to him like Oscar Tusquets — who took
into consideration his intelligence, sense
of humour, surrealism and passion for
detail," says Jordi Artes, general
manager of BD Barcelona. "Buyers
are typically art collectors who love
Dali's work and want a sculptural piece
they can also use."

Designer Jake
Phillips also evokes
Dali's surrealism in his
smoked-oak Salvador
mirror (€3,995), featuring
an inner frame of polished
brass that pulls back to
create unusual reflections.
"The paintings of many
surrealist artists were akin
to windows into a strange
world beyond waking life
— often with an element of
surprise," he says. Lighting,
too, can take its cue from art.

Atelier Van Lieshout's Minimal
crystal lamp in Corten steel (edition of eight, price
on request, pictured on previous page) references
Rodin's famous sculpture, while Achille Salvadori's
24kt gold-plated bronze and enameled Bubbles wall
sconce (edition of 20, €26,400, pictured above) is inspired
by Jeff Koons' pop-art aesthetic.

Art is also informing what is under our feet, with
rugs being transformed into painterly canvases. "All my
designs are inspired by artists, especially the abstract
expressionists," says Phyllis Mann. "Klee [hand-dyed]
rug, from £400] was directly inspired by the Paul Klee
watercolours I saw at Tate Modern's retrospective in
2013 — but also by colour theory exercises that Klee and
his Bauhaus colleagues taught. I wanted to explore the
relationship between violet and yellow amid a series of
tonal greys. For me, the Bauhaus represents a moment
where fine art and design converged awesomely.

Similarly, a show of Balthus paintings in Venice led to
Mann's hand-dyed, knotted-pile Balthus rug (limited
edition, £6,000) using a similar colour palette across
a grid of blocks. 'I'm fascinated by the way he used

louisepembid.com
From left: Yinka Shonibare, steel, aluminium and rags, Mr Bigglesworthy, (price on request), the new sculptures in Central Park, Mohr Design cherry and lacquer office desk, £4,445, inspired by a Ben Kilbourne desk.

colour in rich, ruby tones, chalky neutrals and fleshly purples. They really are quite strange and alluring—almost discordant,” she says. Mark Rothko’s abstract expressionism is evident in Kvadrat’s Sienna rug (from £1,127), which launched in April at the Milan Salone del Mobile. The watercolour effect owes as much to hand-felting techniques as to designer Hella Jongerius’ expertise in colour. “I’m fascinated by the quality of colours in paintings where the many layers of oil create hues with enormous richness and depth,” she says. “In this rug we too applied the technique of layering colours, but using thin sheets of wool.” The art-to-rug journey is also championed at London design store Aram, where Ricky and Mika Burdett’s hand-knotted wool rug entitled Lunch with Zerox (£1,365) takes inspiration from Cy Twombly’s etchings, and Edward Jones’ hand-knotted Umbilical rug (£2,895) draws on Sonia Delaunay’s work.

Contemporary Norwegian artist Trine Kleveland, meanwhile, has reimagined her abstract Blue Triangle painting at Dille & Klöne—a hand-knotted wool rug (from £1,087, pictured on previous page) for The Rug Company. “The Triangle was one of a 4,000-year-old geometric pattern I discovered in Sri Lanka’s Golden Cave Temple, where—first glance—it seemed as if the ceiling was covered with rugs,” she says. “This sparked my desire to commit my painting into a rug. I learnt that just as I use pencil and paint as an artist to create my work, the weavers use yarn. The finished rug is as much a piece of art as my original painting.”

**HOME IS WHERE THE ART IS**


**Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation**

New hang from September 2018

A visit to the Francis Bacon MB Art Foundation, a non-profit institution, provides a fascinating journey into Francis Bacon’s work, life and creative process. Our new hang offers a singular way to discover around 100 items dedicated to the British painter (paintings, graphic works, photographs, objects found in his various studies, letters and working documents), including works by artists who knew Bacon or were influenced by his oeuvre. A room dedicated to his Persian studio completes this re-hang. Free guided tours take place every Tuesday and on the first Saturday of each month, by appointment only.

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