

Notebook

VISIONARY | PRODUCT | CLOTH & PAPER | SPOTLIGHT | AT AUCTION



Philip Stites
and business
partner
Patricia Sims.

Philip Stites Comes Full Circle

Venerable Antiques Expert Opens
New Los Angeles Showroom

BY KAVITA DASWANI

A FEW DAYS BEFORE THE MID-APRIL opening of the new Philip Stites showroom in Los Angeles, the veteran antique dealer and his business partner Patricia Sims were expectedly immersed in last-minute preparations.

“We’re hanging things and putting it all together,” said Stites. “We’re almost there.”



ABOVE Mahogany and marble credenza, designed by architect John Monteith Gates in 1950.

LEFT Kaare Klint attributed Norrevold Mahogany and Niger Leather armchair. Model No. 5999 designed in 1939 for Rud Rasmussen.

BELOW Swedish Klismos chair.



Stites said the intention behind the new space was for clients to be able to find a uniquely curated mix of precious Roman and Greek antiquities, 17th, 18th and 19th Century European furniture and objects as well as more modernist pieces - what he describes as "a little bit of everything - contemporary art mixed with antiques, mixed with mid-century."

With PSMADÉ, Stites and Sims have mined their catalog and reproduced and modernized some of the antique and mid-century pieces based on customers' requests. Robert Garcia, another former partner at Therien, is also involved with PSMADÉ.

A prime example of this is a desk designed by Eleanor Forbes-Gumps in 1942, originally created as a conference table.

The result is a 2,400 square foot showroom in the heart of the La Cienega Design Quarter (LCDQ) that is vaguely split; one window is devoted to antiques, and the other to the recently-established representation of Fournir Collections.

The opening marks something of a full circle for Stites, a renowned expert in rare museum-quality antiques and a partner of Therien & Co Inc in San Francisco, a leading purveyor of prestigious European antiques; there was also a showroom in Los Angeles. (Therien was subsequently sold, but Stites owns the antiques with his former partners.)

The opening marks a new chapter for Stites and Sims and an official debut for PSMADÉ, a design lab comprising contemporary custom furniture.





LEFT The Forbes desk was a key piece designed by Eleanor Forbes, who had an extraordinary fifty year career as a designer and decorator at Gump's San Francisco.

BELOW Pair of Venetian baroque giltwood armchairs. Early 18th century in Venice.

“There is a lot of excitement,” she said. “There are so many names I never knew before. Because during the pandemic, many interior design companies suffered and laid people off, in response, those people started their own companies. Across the country and the world, people are reinventing themselves. **CH** 719 North La Cienega Boulevard, Los Angeles, 310.720.2419, philipstites.com

“Somehow, it seems contemporary again,” said Stites. “We have scaled it up 15 to 20 percent for today’s human, but otherwise, it is identical.”

There are a number of pieces in development under PSMADÉ, said Stites - including a solid wood cocktail table, “artistically curved, but with a little bit of a modern edge to it”, and a credenza with drawers that are “individually carved in an anthropomorphic way, free form, as though an artist did them.

“That’s the way we are trying to approach the line,” he said. “Something artistic rather than just another reproduction of something or something that is too contemporary.”

The showroom’s opening also taps into the overall revitalization of the design scene in Los Angeles in a post-pandemic world.

“There is a resurgence we’ve noticed in the last couple of months,” said Stites. “New showrooms have opened, more are coming, and neighborhood restaurants are being renovated.”

Sims says she has witnessed “a great new energy out there” within the design community and consumers eager to discover new design names and talent.

Stites said the intention behind the new space was for clients to be able to find a uniquely curated mix of precious Roman and Greek antiquities, 17th, 18th and 19th Century European furniture and objects as well as more modernist pieces.

