

FINANCIAL TIMES

how to spend it

INSIDE: 28-PAGE
MEN'S STYLE SPECIAL

HIDE UNBOUND
SENSUAL LEATHER
BREAKS THE MOULD

FMD
#LOVEFMD

THE FRIDAY EDITION OCTOBER 12 2012



Patrick Fauchier sits on a McCollin Bryan Coffee Bean coffee table; Lillane Fawcett sits on a Hans Wegner Valet Chair, at Themes & Variations, London. On wall (from left): Victor Vasarely and Pinton Frères for Tapisserie d'Aubusson Stri-Art tapestry. On C-print photograph and Someday, Somewhere - II C-print photograph (just seen), both by Liu Ren. On table (from left): Toots Zynsky glass vase, £15,000. Christian Astorgueville Rope Coupe. Against wall: Tom Dixon Railings chair

thing
postwar
celebrates
and artistic
brings a
preneur
n gallerist
ire Wrathall
tograph
annon

Before co-founding one of Europe's leading and longest established funds of hedge funds, Patrick Fauchier was a dentist. He was also an assistant professor of biochemistry at the University of Paris. An unlikely background for his present job, perhaps, but he had left dentistry to set up a research company that monitored the performance of hedge-fund managers and concluded that the future lay in funds of funds. Then, "by chance", in 1994, he met Christopher Fawcett, who was working for the French investment company Euris and "who had been

looking at the same area and also felt it was the right time." Together they set up Fauchier Partners in London. Eighteen years on it has about \$6.3bn under management, 65 staff and offices in London, Paris, New York and Guernsey.

It's an unusual career trajectory, but it goes some way to explaining why Fauchier's collection of postwar design is an eclectic one – embracing furniture, lighting, decorative arts and photography: when he finds something new, he likes to study it in depth.

His new passion is glass, so he's planning to spend time in Venice learning to make it in order properly to

appreciate and understand the medium. "It's a fascinating material," agrees Lillane Fawcett, owner of the west London gallery Themes & Variations, who has already introduced Fauchier to the work of 20th-century Venetian glass artists such as Paolo Venini, Flavio Poli and Yoichi Ohira – "the only Japanese master in Murano" Fawcett (the clue is in the surname: she is married to Fauchier Partners' co-founder) has recently added the American glass artist Toots Zynsky to the list (an extraordinary new vase, made of thousands of threads of coloured glass, priced at £15,000, is in Fauchier's sights, pictured above), as well

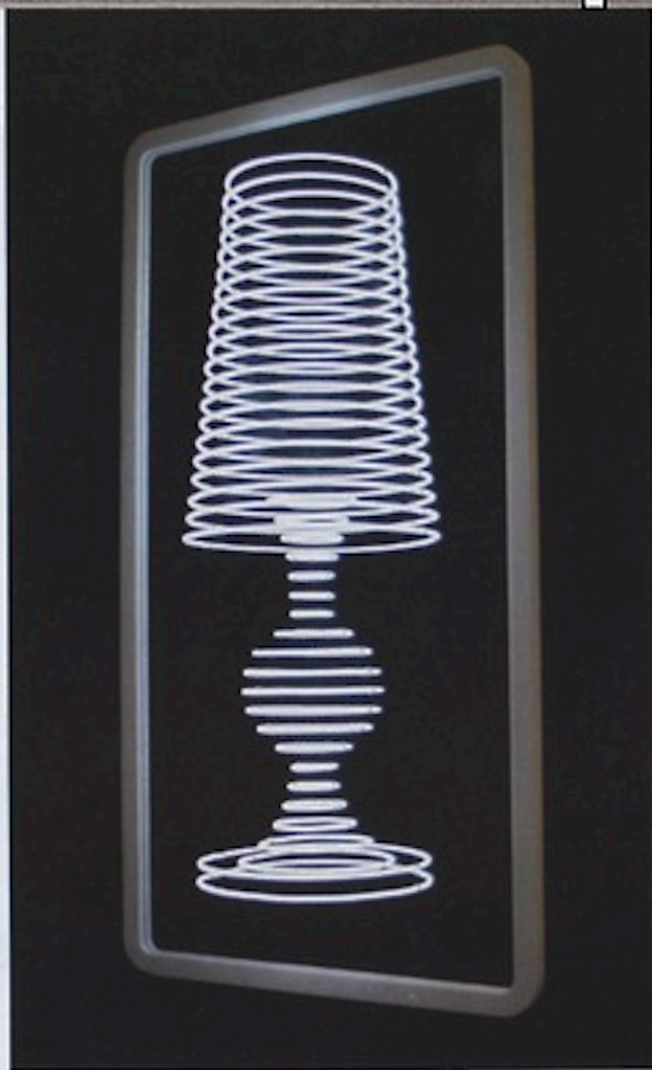
as advising him more generally on postwar design.

"Glass has an immediacy because it has to be made so fast, before it cools down, after which it becomes brittle and you can't shape it," she says, adding that blown glass is usually a matter of teamwork. "Designers rarely have the skill to blow the glass – which can weigh 5kg or 6kg – so they have to be able to work with the blower to get the shape."

Fauchier's first purchase, however, was not glass but a rare pair of long, low leather-and-chrome sofas designed by Carla Venosta in the 1970s and made by Italian brand Cinova. He had not, he stresses, been looking for sofas. "My wife and I had very nice ones in our living room already. But when I saw these, I felt I had to have them. They were so elegant and unusual. I loved the purity of their shape."

He had been more interested in traditional 18th-century French decorative arts and wasn't really a collector. "But thanks to Liliane I became one, because once I'd bought the sofas, the lighting in the room didn't look right." So next he bought a pair of 1970s multifaceted metal lamps by Max Sauze, in which the bulbs were "so integral you don't see where the light comes from"

To Fawcett, they were "spectacular" constructions. "Lighting design," she



Left: Marcus Tremonto
electroluminescent
wire S1 Wall Light

"very high-tech" wall lights by the New York-based designer Marcus Tremonto (pictured left), and he now has his eye on a pendant light, Link Chandelier (£15,780), by Irish designer Niamh Barry. Made of three suspended interlinked bronze ovals edged in glowing LED, it is 2.5m long. But its dramatic size and beauty aside, what appeals to Fauchier is that there are no visible wires between the links.

For as Mies van der Rohe said, God is in the details. Fauchier points to a deceptively simple wooden chair by Danish designer Hans Wegner for Johannes Hansen (he already has a set of Wegner armchairs) in teak, an example of which sold at Bonhams in 2010 for £10,200. Designed in 1953, its name is Valet Chair (pictured on previous page) as its backrest resembles a

coat hanger, the better to drape a jacket over. The seat lifts to become a rail on which to hang your trousers, also revealing a compartment for storing cuff links and so on, its perimeter edged in leather so that it closes silently. "That's the sort of detail I love," says Fauchier.

Over the past two decades Fauchier's collection has grown so much that his

Georgian townhouse in Holland Park has had to be remodelled and refurbished to accommodate it all, as has his home in Normandy. (Only his house on Mustique, where he is chairman of the company that runs the island, has no mid-century design because "it just wouldn't look right".) Among the pieces he most prizes is a chest by Fornasetti, silver by Sabatini and, above all, various items in painted rope by the French artist and polymath Christian Astuguevieille, whose works can command anything from £1,450 for a simple rope bowl (pictured on previous page) to €37,500, the price realised by a hemp-and-wood bench at a Pierre Bergé et Associés auction in June.

But he's not preoccupied with names. "Maybe I'm a strange collector, but I don't tend to follow particular artists. I have to love an object for itself."

An advantage of his friendship with Fawcett is that she knows his homes, so if she finds something she thinks would fit well, she'll tell him. "I don't like 100 per cent of what Liliane suggests, but I trust her and I love enough of it to want to keep taking her advice and collecting."

In any case, he adds: "I'm sure some of the pieces she's recommended are worth much more than when I bought them." Though he insists he doesn't see them as assets. "For investment I buy other things. When I come home, finance is something I like to leave at the door." ♦
Themes & Variations, 231 Westbourne Grove, London W11 (020-7727 5531; www.themesandvariations.com).