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# On Exhibit: Jean Prouvé and the Campana Brothers

## A PASSION FOR PROUVÉ IN TURIN

Laurence and Patrick Seguin started collecting the work of Jean Prouvé more than three decades ago. At the time Prouvé had been all but lost to design history, but the Seguins were compelled by his forward-thinking and yet elegant industrial aesthetic and the technical genius behind the work.

Born in 1901, Prouvé opened his first forge in the French town of Nancy in 1924 and soon moved from making grilles and doors to furniture for mass production and architectural components. After World War II (he was a member of the French resistance) he began making prefabricated emergency housing, and in turn—after opening a factory in 1947—also created the famous prefabricated Maisons Tropicales designed for the French colonies in West Africa. Five years later, he

was forced out of business, and lived in relative obscurity, until his death in 1984, in the now-famous Maison Jean Prouvé that he and his family built in Nancy.

Through September 8, the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli in Turin has on view *A Passion for Jean Prouvé*, which looks at both the furniture and architecture from the Seguins' collection. The couple started out collecting the furniture and soon expanded to take in the whole of Prouvé's work, including the prefab architecture. (Prouvé also designed numerous site-specific buildings, many of them in Nancy.) That the work, small or large, was held to the same standards of design and construction fascinated the Seguins.

In 1989 the Galerie Patrick Seguin opened in Paris and from the start promoted Prouvé's work, with a fervent commitment that not only brought worldwide attention to his work but helped secure his place in design history.

The exhibition at the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli includes some forty pieces from the Laurence and Patrick Seguin collection, most of which are either prototypes or extremely rare. On view are two armchairs—one designed for the dormitory of the University of Nancy in 1932 and the other created for the University of Antony in 1954—as well as furniture produced for use in Africa.

Notable is the Maison Metropole, constructed of aluminum and dating to 1949, when it won a French Ministry of Education competition for a mass-produced rural school that could accommodate a classroom and house a teacher. Today it is considered a masterpiece of nomadic housing. The Ateliers Jean Prouvé completed two, one in Bouqueval, near Paris, and the other in Vantoux in Moselle, which is the one on show in Turin, where it is mounted on the Lingotto test track built atop the 1923 Fiat factory, now a civic and cultural complex that includes the Pinacoteca Giovanni e Marella Agnelli. [pinacoteca-agnelli.it](http://pinacoteca-agnelli.it) [patrickseguin.com](http://patrickseguin.com)



## THE CAMPANA BROTHERS TIMES THREE

The Brazilian-born brothers Fernando and Humberto Campana were trained as an architect and a lawyer, respectively, but have worked together as designers for the past thirty years. They use common (and more recently, extravagant) materials in uncommon ways to create extraordinary pieces of high design that explore issues ranging from poverty (in particular, life in the Brazilian favelas) to globalization. Three early summer exhibitions in London, Paris, and New York look at their recent work. *Brazilian Baroque* ending on June 15 at London's David Gill Galleries features works that weld together metal objects and ornaments, while a longer-running exhibition featuring the brothers' specially commissioned Ocean collection (an evolution of their renowned Sushi series) will run through July 27 at Carpenters Workshop in Paris.

In New York, Friedman Benda Gallery will give the duo their much overdue first solo show in the United States. *Campana Brothers: Concepts* will run through July 3 and feature new work designed for this exhibition including Boca (Portuguese for "mouth") chairs and a screen in cowhide; the Racket collection of chairs and a screen in bent brass; the bent-steel Fitas (Portuguese for "stripe") series; and the Ametista collection of glass panels incorporating amethyst rocks from São Paulo. Per-

haps most notably, *Concepts* will also include a new version of the stuffed-toy Banquetes, this one made from stuffed alligators.

[davidgillgalleries.com](http://davidgillgalleries.com) [carpentersworkshopgallery.com](http://carpentersworkshopgallery.com)  
[friedmanbenda.com](http://friedmanbenda.com)

