

"In an era in which the effects of over-consumption, over-production, globalization, homogenization, and disposability are debated daily, the desire for unique works reflects a larger socio-cultural drive. Consumers and collectors alike seek to surround themselves with objects that speak to their sense of individuality." -Libby Sellers, 2010

Abstract: Vintage Modern Contemporary [VMC] illustrates how collectible design matured over the past three decades, while actively securing its market. Entering 2020, VMC's mission is to provide accessibility to the world of collectible design, broadening its reach to major cities across the globe. The market needs to catch up to the designers, as contemporary artists can share their work to virtually anyone from anywhere on the planet. Mass social media demonstrates the inoperative physical space between the technologies sharing collectible design and the clients. The Showroom proposes a new avenue for exhibitions and viewings, to reach not only dedicated collectors but the public at large. VMC is a membership-based platform for all roles involved in the design market encouraging community involvement. Passion is what takes us into new movements, so let us embrace an entity that cultivates creativity, craftmanship, and connoisseurship.

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Introduction

Entering 2020, the collectible design market must use the momentum of growth since its infancy at the turn of the century to stabilize the trade of vintage, modern, and contemporary design. Scholars have just begun to understand the grasp of collectible design and its place within the art market. Looking back in hindsight, the partnerships established during the late eighties into nineties, were pivotal points that lauched the first design focused galleries. Once the early 2000s came along, so did the craze for modern design at auction, followed by contemporary designers creating and producing more work than ever before. Despite the rate of expansion the past two decades, the industry in itself was once a true niche. Fairs, which are now comparable to a museum or gallery walks, were once solely for people of the trade. For the amount of works selling at auction for astronomical prices, connoisseurship is the only security for the works to hold their value. For this, the professionals, as well as, the clientele must be informed and educated on the market of collectible design. Ideally, creating a snowball effect of production, research, analysis, and design.

The Showroom seeks to resolve the issue of accessibility to the world of design. Current methods, such as, oversaturated fairs are unsustainable for the industry as a whole. The Showroom aims to provide a structured environment that allows for an involved social community based through a professional membership.

A gallery can now invest in a membership at VMC Showrooms with the money saved from the peripheral fairs that brought little value to their practice, which tens of thousands of dollars is tossed away every fair, for each of the many attended a year. By no means does VMC intend to

instigate a rivalry with art fair organizations but more precisely present the showrooms as an avenue for refinement, so fairs can better focus on curating exhibitions, which look to prompt reflection and improve our overall critical lens as a society. The quarterly exhibitions curated by the VMC team will display a balanced manifestation of vintage modern and contemporary design, each telling a unique history.

Rather than re-address the tired dispute of the collective term for said market of which this business proposal is embedded in. Collectible design. From here on out referred to as stated or potentially if out of laziness the all-encompassing umbrella term of 'design'. Let us also be clear, in saying that for the purpose of this paper and in the eyes of VMC, the titles designer and artist are used synonymously. For anyone who has not kept up to date on the news breaking articles, exhibitions, auction records, etc. via your cultural channels, it is time for new structural approaches to the collectible design industry. Which brings us to the main argument or proposal of the Showroom's business model. While the debates between whether separating fine art and collectible design into two distinct classifications is best for the market, or will the segregation of the two even persist, but rather disperse the issue and accept that art may only add to was has been designed. As well, now the commonality of dealers and galleries working together with interior designers and consultants has bridged the gap between architecture and the fine arts through the recognition of design over the past three decades.

I. Executive Summary

The Showroom's mission is to create the ideal avenue for those in the industry of collectible design to come together as a community and host an accessible environment, that is both professional, as well as, social.

An integrative and sustainable platform is sought after by the patrons of collectible design. As more designers pursue their work, the need for more space and networking has become more relevant. The Showroom provides both. In addition to the format of art fairs that has erupted, temporary exhibitions spring up for a week's time across the globe, The Showroom seeks to become a stable environment for exhibiting available works of art and design, along with private viewings requested by collecting members from dealers year round in established cities. This structure prevents the infamous 'art fair fatigue' element, along with also providing accessibility to clients outside of the major art gallery metropoles. Even though many design galleries have clustered in said metropoles, it does not represent the entirety of collectors and designers in the trade at an international level.

The Showroom provides a common ground to show and experience work from international dealers and galleries, in an acquainted environment, wherever your design and art travels may bring you. There is a membership for each role in the collectible design market at VMC.

Whether a dealer, designer, advisor, or collector, all are clients in the matter of the Showroom.

A membership with the Showroom allows one dependable insight on collectible design, by hosting collaborations with galleries and designers, our tea rooms for meetings both business and social, and our quarterly paper. Our community aims to comprise individuals who hold their passion and expertise of collectible design close to their heart.

II. Current Market

As the collective term, collectible design, only recently came to a consistency, the past disarray around the matter is very likely due to the dispute of what exactly to call this new phenomenon. The pressure of defining the collectible design market since entering the century has long been overdue. However, defining such an expansive discipline holds great weight, as the market of collectible design will ever be in comparison with the fine art market. The most fitting definition for design is from a 2009, one semester course History of Design: 1850 – 2000, defining design, "broadly and considers various media ranging from graphics to products, and it addresses examples of both mass produced as well as batch-produced and unique 'one-off' objects, the 'named' as well as the 'anonymous'."

Considering the ideology behind the Showroom is based on the relationship of vintage, modern, and contemporary design, the matter of this paper to be precise, is in truth just a new classification of the decorative arts. Since the Industrial Revolution, the decorative arts market evolved into what is now referred to as collectible design. The ability to pinpoint the start of active growth is only possible due to the correspondences and the accounts from a handful of dealers who marked a new territory of what is considered fine art. As these galleries reached major anniversaries in the past few years, many catalogues were published offering great material informing today's readers of the early years, triggering the market for design. However, as R & Company's co-founder, Snyderman, remarked, "we are still only in the beginning stages of what

¹Lichtman, Sarah A. "Reconsidering the History of Design Survey." Journal of Design History 22, no. 4 (2009): 343.

we see as a new movement within the design world," especially when comparing it to the "convoluted" art market. The arrival of a new decade is sure to unravel another layer to design.

i. Market Growth

Since 2005, when designers such as Eileen Gray, Marc Newson, and Frank Lloyd Wright began gracing news headlines with record-breaking sales at auction, collectible design has become a mainstream commodity. A commodity with circumstances that excludes more than 70% of the world's population financially.³ This is necessary to keep in mind when interpreting the market, as the rise in popularity and sales may continue, while the number of buyers remains relatively unaffected.

Production over this timeframe, generated an exponential surge in designers, work materialized, and methods of producing these works. Technological innovations permitted the advancements in design, by providing essential components that historically held works from being materialized. La Chaise (Fig. 1) designed by Charles and Ray Eames is a brilliant example of a work impossible to create at the time its inception. The physical chair was not materialized until forty years after its initial rendering.⁴ With more designers and works produced than ever before, the industry must prepare as these works begin returning to the market for resale.

² Snyderman, Evan, Zesty Meyers, Dan Rubenstein. "R & Company: 20 Years of Discovery." Damiani and R & Company. 2017.

^{2.1} Quito, Anne. "Smart investors are now collecting design rather than art." Quartzy. Mar 22, 2018.

³ McAndrew, Claire. "The Art Market Report 2019." Art Basel | UBS. 2019.

⁴ Mid-Century Home. "Charles & Ray Eames, La Chaise Chair's Curvy Elegance." Mid-Century Home. May 22, 2015.



Fig. 1 | La Chaise, Charles & Ray Eames. Designed 1948, Produced by Vitra since 1990. American.

The countless design focused publications and magazines that have sprung up since the early nineties, speaks for the amount of readers interested in the design market. Along with having the annual UBS Art Market Report, which covers the entire art market, DeTnk has now published a decade's worth of reports solely analyzing the collectible design market. This specialized report supplies the industry with primary information to now better grapple with future possibilities and the direction of design's growth.

ii. Market Trends

As net worth is on the continuous rise, individuals from younger generations are now entering the buying echelon and they are bringing their spending habits with them to the collectible design realm. As found in The Art Market Report of 2019, of those spending over one milion on works, just under half at 45% were of the millenial generation, 77% of those millenial collectors purchased decorative arts since 2016.⁵

The trend that developed simulteanously to the market, engaging dealers, collectors, and enthusiasts of collectible design, as the new avenue for sales, is the fair. At the moment, the Art Market Report 2019, surveyed galleries attending an average of four fairs a year, despite a large percentage at 25%, exhibited at ten plus fairs a year. Only now with years experience, dealers are coming to understand which fairs attract their desired audience and which prevail unprofitable. An interestingly telling statistic, is the retention rate of long-term exhibitors at top fairs declined: those exhibiting ten times or more at a given fair fell from 19% in 2017 to 13% in 2018. Evidently dealers are beginning to make their own analysis of the various global fairs, for to exhibit ten consecutive years and then not return says a little something to all aspects of the fair.

This was a year of record auctions, one sale intensifying the next. The star sale of 2019 was of the Lalanne collection, with a total of 274 works offered and majority of the hammer prices significantly exceeded the high estimates. Francois-Xavier's Unique Rhinocretaire (page vi) fetched a whopping seven million with a high estimate of merely one million.

⁵ McAndrew, Claire. "The Art Market Report 2019." Art Basel | UBS. 2019.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

iii. Market Needs

The market of collectible design is in need of structure and authority to allow stability. Once there is stability, craftmanship and connoisseurship can be cultivated. The photographer Julius Schulman, reflecting on staging architectural photography, commented, "good design is seldom accepted. It has to be sold." Design requires consistency, context and conversation; an area that exisiting platforms could certainly improve on and benefit from.

Individuals who collect, spend a great deal of time studying these objects and the eras from which they were produced. Historically, studies have always remained a consistent practice in collecting the arts, 9 and yet, no measure to foster such creativity has been initiated.

A collector's success is directly proportionate to how much time they put into research and education. Whether they choose to collect from galleries, auction houses, or direct from the designers, the overriding recommendation is to explore their interests and these varied markets, establish lasting relationships with their points of contact in each of the fields and participate or attend key events and exhibitions throughout the year.¹⁰

The discussion of costs when it comes to exhibitor fees at major art fairs must be addressed, as a market cannot flourish, let alone function, without all its essential players.

⁸ Kaplan, Wendy. "California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way." Cambridge: MIT Press. Accessed October 16, 2019. ProQuest Ebook Central. 2011. p. 289.

⁹ Sellers, Libby. "WHY WHAT HOW: Collecting Design in a Contemporary Market." HSBC Private Bank. 2010. From the Kunstkammer (art chamber) and the Wunderkammer (cabinet of curiousities) of the Habsburg emperors to the souvenirs accumulated on the Grand Tours of 18th-century British aristocrats... from the institutional collections established from private donations at the turn of the twentieth century... and the great European Decorators of the interwar period, the appreciation of objects and their perceived power to imbue vestiges of enlightenment and prestige is millenia old.

¹⁰ Ibid.

V. The Showrooms

VMC has the full intention of becoming an international entity, however to accomplish this we must establish ourselves by opening three intitial showrooms across North America. As access is embedded in the misson of VMC, and design is a worldwide phenomenon, the capability to expand abroad entering a new phase with three new locations at a time, is a large meter for considering success. The showrooms will be geographically spread out therefor no region is subjected to lack of market news and culture, or to the opposite extreme, oversaturation. The projected time frame of each phase is two years time, to garner substantial awareness ensuring the success of each location. Approaching VMC with this structured format of expansion, allows for community growth while pressure for acquisitional growth occurs in waves at a time.

Referencing, Modern California design, investigated by Wendy Kaplan, "it was functionalist, anti-ornament, and utopian in the conviction that design and technology could transform society." The metamorphasis of what modern technology can accomplish, is only now discernible looking back, as designers continue to transcend their predecessors (recall La Chaise, page 6). Society needs to actively support its growth and continuing impact. The Showroom seeks to be the unequivocal visible continuity that nurtures the creative community.

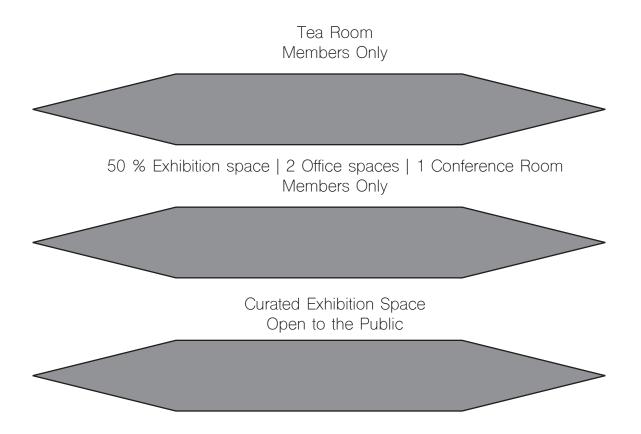
¹¹ Kaplan, Wendy. "California Design, 1930-1965: Living in a Modern Way." Cambridge: MIT Press. Accessed October 16, 2019. ProQuest Ebook Central. 2011.

i. Locations & Property

The first three flagship showrooms will be grounded in Miami, Florida; Austin, Texas; and Los Angeles, California. Each of these cities has growing design and art communities, as well as, a small amount of formally established annual design events and weeks. The selected cities for the flagship showrooms will only benefit the general public as a whole, providing a new avenue for cultural learning and growth.

Phase II of VMC Again taking into account the UBS Art Market Report 2019, the plan at the moment, is grounding showrooms in China, Brazil, and Germany.

ii. Structure



VI. Membership

i. Target Members

VMC offers membership to all roles involved in the collectible design market. Our clients are both the suppliers and the consumers of design. Systematically, VMC memberships are offered in two forms, either corporate or personal.

VMC Showrooms ideally will be positioned as a desirable, exclusive investment towards the good of the collectible design market. VMC is a professional, scholarly, and social entity that supports interpersonal community involvement and reflection. For galleries and designers, membership is an investment towards exhibitions and sales. For collectors and scholars, it is a common ground where curiousity and interest in fine art and design is welcomed. For advisors and consultants, the showrooms are a familiar forum for conducting business with clients. Whether it be your local showroom or a distant showroom, VMC is a home base for art weeks and travel.

ii. Application Process & Dues

All applications require a petition for membership, an interview, and two member referrals. The application process divides memberships into one of two classifications, corporate and person. Corporate memberships are available for dealers and firms who plan to utilize the showrooms' exhibition services for expanding client base and outreach. A personal membership is for those who are either collectors, scholars, critics, or enthusiasts looking for another avenue for visual inspiration.

VMC Memberships Dues

Corporate Personal

	Per Month	Annually		Per Month	Annually
Galleries	\$ 250	\$ 3,000	Collector	\$ 250	\$ 3,000
Dealers	\$ 200	\$ 2,400	Advisor/Consultant	\$ 200	\$ 2,400
Designer	\$ 100	\$ 1,200	Enthusiast	\$ 15	\$ 180
Interior Designer	\$ 150	\$ 1,800	Student	\$ 5	\$ 60

^{*} The membership costs are approximate and take into consideration of the following;

[•] average starting cost (per/m²) for a booth at international art fairs,

[•] number of art fairs a gallery participates in a year;

[•] cost of tickets to artfairs (general admission and v.i.p.)

[•] cost of entry to museums and galleries

[•] shipping and installation costs

VII. Marketing

Ideally, the Showroom VMC will not require extensive marketing outreach once the initial phase is complete. After two years of partnerships with galleries, dealers, designers, and advisors, high profile collectors and academics who value VMC's mission, it is expected to retain a strong clientele for memberships. Similar business models of professional shared space memberships, such as, WeWork and SohoHouse, deal with strict admission policies that lead to occasional wait lists, or in the case of SohoHouse, an on-going wait list of 27,000 applications.¹²

The inaugural exhibition served as a sample to collect data that accurately represents the current collectible design market. Works sold at auction and works sold on the primary market are two very distinct notions; yet to analyze one without the other would leave a market report undone. Therefor, the exhibition list consists of seven works sold at auction since 2018 and seven works offered at fair market value. The lots chosen, follow and highlight the trends found in the UBS Art Market Report 2019 and the DeTnk 2018 Collectible Design Report. The works included range from the year 1908 to 2017, brushing the surface of each period, with five works that are considered contemporary. Nonetheless, when presented together, the time periods disappear encouraging conversation of history, society, and culture.

The works included, offered at fair market value, are sourced from unique international galleries. These galleries will be approached to consign selected works, along with an invitation for

¹² Kirkham, Chris and Erich Schwartzel. "Exclusive Soho House Wants More Members – Lots of Them." Wall Street Journal. May 12, 2018. https://www.wsj.com/articles/exclusive-soho-house-wants-more-memberslots-of-them-1526130743

membership, the first year's exhibition fees waived. Additionally, a sample of fifty professionals, will be offered waived membership dues for the first year.

VMC hopes that paid marketing, will incorporate our initial costs on the inaugural exhibitions partnered and possible by the invited memberships. Once we have our foundational members recognizing the value of the Showroom, applications are expected to soon collect, from word of mouth. One personal memory of VMC The Showroom is worth exponentially more (to both the client & VMC) than ad space in a magazine.

The buyers and suppliers who VMC will be working with as members will include the most relatice and experienced professionals who have established themselves over the early twenty first century. It is a time to celebrate their success and what better way than community collaborations to present the industry as a collective.

Sample Exhibition Launch of North America

Exhibition List



Joseph Hoffman Sette 1908 Austrian

Wright: Art + Design (June 2019)

Hammer Price: \$2,750



Ludwig Mies van der Rohe Barcelona ottomans, pair.

1928 German

Wright: Art + Design Hammer price: \$2,000



Gio Ponti 1891 – 1979 Ceiling Light, 1940. Italy

Phillips: Design (Oct 2019) Hammer Price: \$ 8,500





Paavo Tynell Pare of Ceiling Lamp 1950 Finland

Piasa: Jose Zanine Caldas / Scandanavian Selected Design (Oct 2019)

Hammer price: \$54,000



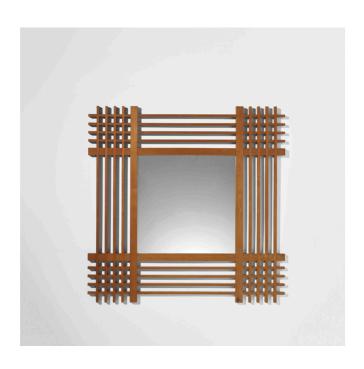
German American.

1927 - 2016

Phillips: Design (Oct 2019) Hammer Price: \$26,500



¹³ Logemann, Jan. "Consumer Modernity as Cultural Translation: European Émigrés and Knowledge Transfers in Mid-Twentieth-Century Design and Marketing." Geschichte Und Gesellschaft 43, no. 3 (2017): 427-28. "[Knoll Associates] firm produced licensed Bauhaus furniture and developed a comprehensive 'Knoll look' of shapes, textiles, and colors...The Knoll look and the modernist international style of postwar design can thus be read as cultural cross-fertilization, resulting from knowledge transfers facilitated by emigres.



Ettore Sottsas, Jr. 1917 - 2007 Rare mirror, 1959. Italian. Phillips: Design (Oct 2019) Hammer Price: \$ 34,000



Sergio Rodrigues 1927 - 2014 Tonico Sofa, 1963. Brazil. Teo, Sao Paolo. FMV: \$ 17,000



Line Vautrin Miroire sorciere (cactus) 1965 French Galerie Charrandeau. FMV: \$75,000



Maria Pergay 1930 -Tapios Volant, Flying Carpet Daybed 1968. French Phillips: Design (Oct 2019) Hammer Price: \$ 70,000



Ueli Berger 1937 – 2008 DS-600 Non-Stop Snake Sofa, 1972. Swiss Morentz, Waalwijk. FMV: \$ 29,700



Marcel Breuer. F41 Lounge on Wheels for Tecta, 1980. Hungary. Morentz, Waalwijk. FMV: \$ 6,950



Donald Judd Daybed with Custom Brazilian Cowhide and Down Feather Mattress, 2003. American. Forsyth, St. Louis. FMV: \$ 30,000



Ingrid Donat.
Table Basse Or Tout Bronze (Grand Modéle), 2006.
French.
Phillips (Dec 2018)
Hammer Price: \$106,250



Zaha Hadid Seoul Desk 2008 British Iraqi. Leila Heller Gallery. FMV: \$ 136,100



The Haas Brothers
Taz-Been & Cheetah Hayworth & La Brea Brad
Pitt & Quasidodo & Fruit Stripe (5 works).
2017
American.
Christie's (Sept 2018)
Hammer Price: \$187,500

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