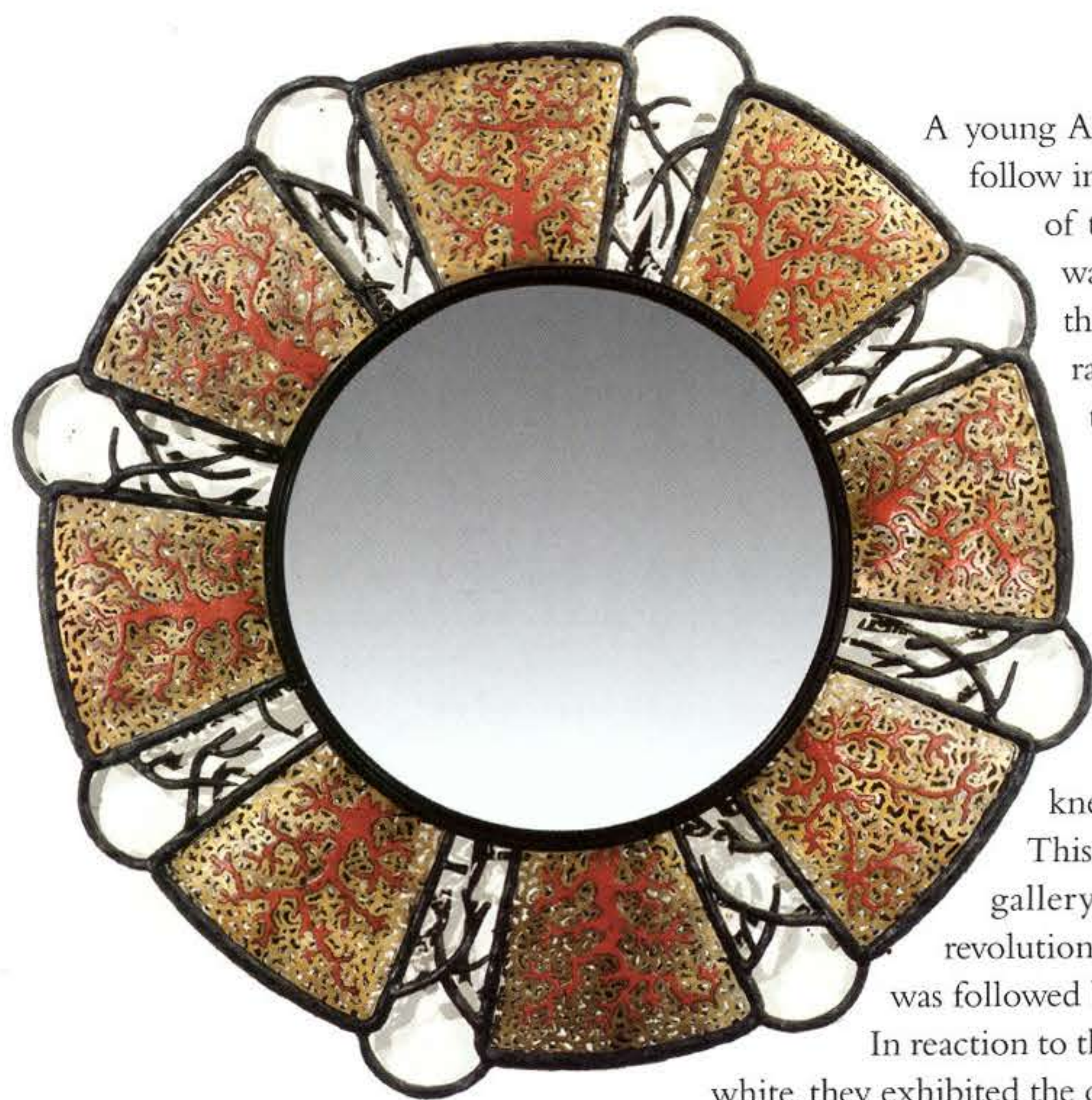


CONTEMPORARY FRENCH DESIGN

THE EXOTIC EYE OF A PARISIAN COLLECTOR
BY CÉCILE VERDIER



A young American collector's dearest ambition was to follow in the footsteps of the famous Parisian patrons of the 30s. Both cultured and sophisticated, he was particularly interested in the decorators of the 30s and resolved, during the 1990s, to decorate his own Parisian apartment according to their principles and tastes; commissioning contemporary French designers and trusting them to create pieces of furniture and objects typical of their vision but also in accordance with his personal tastes and realised by the expertise of French craftsmen.

When he met Frédéric de Luca, owner of the gallery 'En attendant les barbares', he knew that his dream could become a reality. This gallery – along with Pierre Staudenmayer's gallery 'Neotu' and Gladys Mougins's gallery – revolutionised design in the late Eighties in Paris, and was followed by other galleries in London and New York. In reaction to the era's very strict design, mostly in black and

white, they exhibited the creations of a new range of designers characterised by free lines and by using sophisticated materials such as bronze, gilt bronze, exotic woods or ceramics, in a wide range of colours. This chimed perfectly with the taste of our collector, who encouraged them to incorporate such precious materials as vellum, lacquer, plaster, coral, mother-of-pearl and even gems into their designs, and sometimes supplied them with the precious minerals to stimulate their imaginations.

As a result, his collection combines creations, most of them unique pieces, by the major French designers of the time, Elizabeth Garouste and Mattia Bonetti, André Dubreuil, Eric Schmitt and Olivier Gagnaire, as well as by younger designers promoted by the same galleries: Jacques Jarrige, Laurence Montano, Fabienne Jouvin etc. In a wide range of forms and colours, always light and clean, he created an interior full of poetry and fantasy. This achievement has been widely published in interior design magazines. As the project is now completed and the space is becoming too small for the collection, it is time for our collector to move to a new location and begin again.

André Dubreuil (b. 1950)
'Corail' mirror, 1998–1999
wrought steel, enamel
and copper
47 1/4 in. (120 cm.) diam.
Estimate: €15,000–20,000

SALE 20th Century Decorative Art and Design, Paris, 27 November

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