



Second Generation "Finn Juhl was fascinated by shapes which defy gravity and create a visual lightness of weight. This same feeling of lightness and of joy in living is equally expressed in my photo of 1999, which you see above it. I have already sold this work to the Ixelles Museum and to the Royal Photographic Society in England. On the bench, the silver plate is by the pair of Italian artists Franco Albini and Franca Helg. Albini's design office has now been taken over by his son. I too represent the second generation."

Selfie "At home, my father wanted white walls, but he hung up these two self-portraits by me. The photo on the left has just been acquired by the Musée de l'Élysée in Lausanne. As for the photo in the middle, I took it in Uganda. When I sell a photo to a museum, the profit is always turned over to a charitable good work."

Nature "Around the table, you can see the Ant chairs of Arne Jacobsen, originally conceived in 1952 for the Danish pharmaceutical company Novo Industri, which later became Novo Nordisk. Jacobsen liked to give his creations poetic names referring to his greatest source of inspiration, Nature. You only need to think of the Swan Chair and the Egg Chair. The lamp hanging over the table is also by him. It was issued by Louis Poulsen in 1957."

Anonymous "The 'Bastiano' sofa by Tobia Scarpa for Knoll belonged to my parents. On the right, you can see a 1951 lamp-stand by Gino Sarfatti. Just in front, I have placed an anonymous chair, that my father gave me when I was 18. Even without being able to identify the artist, one sees from its form, its technique, and its materials, that it has quality. It's my father who taught me a sense of the object, for which he had a gift."

Jam "The jam servers by Royal Copenhagen, on the window shelf, are a collaboration between the goldsmith George Jensen and several Danish potters. With the four little spoons, these objects in modern shapes are already a century old, and they are still intact."

Matisse "What this is about is 'Matisse and his model': it's a photo of the period, taken by the French-Hungarian photographer Brassai in 1939. In 2000, when I had the good fortune to be the first to exhibit photography at TEFAF Maastricht, my first exhibition was devoted to portraits of artists. Those who didn't have the means to buy a real Matisse could make a start with a real photo of his studio."

Come-back "On the low table, I've placed a special piece of silverware by Luigi Grazzini, from 1930. As the box is hammer-worked in a very subtle way, the light is reflected magnificently. This is one of the first objects that I sold in the family gallery, and it has just once more crossed my path. A magic moment!"

Symbiosis "The Dane, Finn Juhl, designed this Table Bench in 1952, when he took part in the conception of the seat of the United Nations in New York. When you visit Juhl's house you see how —just as I do the same— he lived in symbiosis with architecture, design, and art. It's very inspiring."

Fisherman's seat For the two folding stools, Poul Høndeved based himself on the most ancient stool ever discovered in Scandinavia. He took its dimensions, but replaced the bronze with wood and leather."

Mathematics "My 1996 dining table is the Superellipse of the Swedish designer Bruno Mathsson and of Piet Hein, a Danish architect, poet, and mathematician, who found a perfect shape between a rectangle and an oval."

Bread "The Finnish Tapio Wirkkala was a solitary designer, known for his formal language, organic and sensual. On the table, you can see two ornamental objects in silver: a bread-basket and a tray in leaf form. The ceramics are by Carl Haller for Royal Copenhagen. Each unique object is accompanied by a bronze base by Knud Anderson."



OPEN DOOR

Welcome to the home of the fine art photographer and art dealer Sterenn Denys

Reporter: Thijs Demeulemeester
Photo: Jelle Vans

We are meeting Sterenn Denys on the top floor of the former Austro-Hungarian Embassy. This dealer in design and in photography, herself a photographer, has created at the heart of the Sablon a refined cocoon abounding in design pieces and in signed photographs. "When I look out of the window, I have the impression of being in Rome. I have a view over a pretty little square and onto the superb front of the Church of the Minimes", she explains. "Being surrounded by art works of quality doesn't paralyse me as an artist. On the contrary, that brings me much inspiration and joy in living."

Sterenn started her career in the world of art at the side of her father Philippe (1949-2010), an art dealer of international renown who had a gallery on the Sablon and who was at the foundation of the design section of the art fair TEFAF Maastricht in 2009. Since 1996 he had been the only one to show there historic design of the 20th century. "When I was a child, our house was furnished in the Art Nouveau style. In my early teens, there was only Art Deco. And from my 17th year, there was chiefly Scandinavian design. I grew up with this transition in styles. My father taught me to recognise quality by being in daily contact with all these art objects. The beauty of an object, you can only ascertain this in real life. Not when you buy it on Internet."

In addition to being a dealer in decorative arts and in photographs of the 20th century, Sterenn Denys is herself a photographer. On the 7th, 8th, and 9th of February, she will be exhibiting in the Vanderborcht Building in Brussels, in the context of the collective exhibition 'Visiting Card'.