

NEW YORK

MATERIAL GAINS

FRESH WORK MINGLES WITH VINTAGE DESIGN AT NEW YORK'S SOFA

One of the best ways to keep track of the rapidly evolving field of contemporary decorative art and design is to attend the trio of **sofa—Sculpture Objects & Functional Art**—fairs held each year in New York, Chicago, and Santa Fe. The 13th New York edition, with 60 dealers, takes over the Park Avenue Armory this month from the 15th through 19th.

The East Coast event is the most elite of the three, in part because of its smaller size. "There's not as much space in New York, so dealers can't be as experimental as they are in Chicago," says sofa's founder and director, **Mark Lyman**. "Dealers therefore bring their top pieces. This is a place where museums would find acquisitions."

Jorden Nye, director of the **Jane Sauer Gallery**, in Santa Fe, agrees. "We tell our artists to focus on

quality not quantity for this fair." The gallery, which specializes in material-based art, is offering, among other works, newspaper paintings by the Bay Area-based Danish artist **Gugger Petter**, for \$14,500; copper-plate collage paintings by Washington, D.C.-based **Nancy Scheinman**, for up to \$18,000; and fine-art glass.

Joanna Bird, of

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Moderne Gallery is offering **Wendell Castle's** 1980 music stand. Below: **Ruudt Peters's** Eve brooch, from his "ANIMA" series, is priced around \$9,800 at the booth of Ornamentum.



London, is bringing fine-art pottery, while contemporary Asian works are to be found at the booths of New York's **Joan Mirviss**; **TAI Textile Arts**, of Santa Fe; and **Katie Jones**, of London, who is new this year. The fair also offers a range of jewelry, from conceptual to high-end, with **Ornamentum**, of Hudson, New York,

presenting a solo show of 15 abstract pieces from Dutch artist **Ruudt Peters's** "ANIMA" series. **Galerie Van Der Planken**, of Antwerp, another newcomer, has unusual semiabstract bronze sculptures, and New York's **Thea Burger** is bringing a selection of bronzes and ceramics by the late sculptor **Ruth Duckworth**, whose estate the private dealer represents.

Although the fair is a testing ground for fresh work, it also contains a good deal of secondary-market 20th-century design. London's **Galerie Besson** has ceramics by **Hans Coper** and **Lucie Rie**, while **Moderne Gallery**, of Philadelphia, is featuring a 1980 music stand by **Wendell Castle**, priced at \$60,000, and a 1964 end table by **George Nakashima**, for \$24,500.

Unlike the many other dealers at the fair who participate in Chicago or Santa Fe as well, **Moderne** sticks to Manhattan. "The New York show brings out a concentrated number of very knowledgeable collectors who understand the important vintage work from the American Craft movement that we represent," says **Robert Aibel**, the gallery's founder and director. —Meredith Mendelsohn

PARIS

GERMAN EXPRESSION

The acclaimed New Leipzig School, with its edgy figuration and accomplished technique, continues to influence emerging German painters. In "Berlin. We Are Alive!" at **Favardin & de Verneuil** from April 6 through May 4, five such artists make their Paris debut with powerful, moody, and sarcastic works displaying the school's *savoir faire* but conveying their own contemporary visions. The Berlin-based **Christian Awe**, **Tom Fleischhauer**, **Sebastian Schrader**, and **Meike Zopf** and the Leipzig-born and trained **Jörg Lohse**, who works in Bavaria, "are mature talents who are not yet stars but already have both French and American collectors," says **Laurent de Verneuil**.

Zopf's disturbingly poetic acrylic and charcoal on canvas *Leuchtende Stunden II* ("Shining Hours II"), 2009, left, of a faceless woman and cropped figures, can be had for €8,400 (\$11,000). (Other works range in price from around \$14,000 to \$70,000). The exhibition, produced in collaboration with **Berlin Art Projects**, reflects the burgeoning French appreciation of what Verneuil terms "the new avant-garde, a return to classical forms of representation and real *savoir faire*. It's stimulating, invigorating, and alive." —Jean Bond Rafferty

