



YASHAR: HAIR BY SIMONE PRUSSO FOR TIGI AT ATOMO MANAGEMENT; MAKEUP BY COSETTA GIORGETTI AT WM MANAGEMENT; FASHION ASSISTANT: CAMILLA SOSSI; DEMISCH: HAIR BY LISA AHARON FOR CHANEL; AT JED ROOF; MAKEUP BY LISA AHARON FOR CHANEL; AT JED ROOF; FASHION ASSISTANT: SAMANTHA MACALEESE

NINA YASHAR Milan Whether she is furnishing a room or merely entering one, there is something wonderfully theatrical about Nina Yashar. And while the design maven, who was born in Tehran, concedes that her friend Miuccia Prada holds some sway over her wardrobe, she is not really the type to take direction from anyone. “I do not follow any specific rules to determine my style,” declares Yashar, a former rug dealer whose gutsy, glamorous taste is informed by instinct. At Nilufar, her gallery on the Via della Spiga, vintage and contemporary pieces by designers like Carlo Mollino, Gio Ponti, Ico Parisi, Martino Gamper, Bethan Laura Wood, and Lindsey Adelman mix with abandon. (The Jean Royère sofa shown behind Yashar, *opposite*, is from 1957; the Archimede Seguso table is from the '40s; and the painting is a recent work by Tony Wetfloor.) It was Yashar who famously enabled Gamper to carve up an entire suite of Ponti hotel furniture in 2007 and give it a “new destiny” as reconfigured tables, bureaus, and chairs. She has also collaborated with the art dealer Daniele Balice on a series of “fictional living spaces” in Paris and Beirut, affectionately called *Spot* and *Squat*. “I like to show objects and furniture in a series of rooms because I love to let the viewers dream, thinking that any room could be a part of their home,” she explains. “I like people considering objects related to their real life.” Coming from Yashar, “real” is, of course, a relative term. To inaugurate her new warehouse space during the Milan Furniture Fair in April, she presented a succession of artfully curated tableaux. The “house” that inspired them? La Scala.

SUZANNE DEMISCH New York At 2013’s Design Miami fair, the Demisch Danant booth, with its plush wall-to-wall carpeting, low-slung Maria Pergay sofas and coffee tables, and groovy Sheila Hicks wall hangings, stood out from the fray as an oasis of cool composure, practically begging visitors to grab a martini and make themselves at home—if only they had been allowed to sit on anything. (“Ugh, Suzanne has the best taste,” came the constant refrain.) Since they founded their intimate second-floor Chelsea gallery 10 years ago, Demisch and her Paris-based partner, Stephane Danant, have made French design from the '60s and '70s their specialty. Though seemingly narrow, it’s a vein that runs deep, and one Demisch has found to be particularly loaded. (Surrounding Demisch, *right*, are a Roger Fatus 1967 wenge-and-Plexiglas desk; an Etienne Fermigier floor lamp from 1970; a tubular chrome rocking chair by Jean-Michel Sanejouand from 1971; and a recent cube piece by Pergay, who, at 85, is one of the few living designers the dealer represents.) Her approach is scholarly, though never stuffy (“Librarians rock!” she exclaims, regarding her tendency to accessorize dresses by Céline or Balenciaga with loafers and reading glasses). It helps that the sleek, sculptural aesthetic plays well with others. “In that era, people were mixing contemporary design with Old Masters or Art Deco,” she says, citing Yves Saint Laurent, who lived among furniture by Claude Lallanne and Eileen Gray and artworks by Frans Hals, Paul Cézanne, and Georges Braque. “It was a period of real connoisseurship,” Demisch says, adding almost unnecessarily, “very sophisticated and elegant.” »

Total LOOK

Alix Browne meets four design gallerists for whom fabulousness is all-encompassing. Photographs by Jeremy Liebman



This page: Demisch wears a Balenciaga top and skirt; Manolo Blahnik pumps. Styled by Nora Milch. Opposite: Yashar wears a Prada coat; Miu Miu earrings; her own turban, ring, and shoes. Styled by Sissy Vian.



These gallerists have allowed the world's most uncompromising designers to explore their wildest—and, often, least commercially viable—ideas.

CLEMENCE KRZENTOWSKI Paris When asked to describe her personal style, Clémence Krzentowski says that she likes “comfortable, feminine, easy-to-wear clothes.” Translation: Azzedine Alaïa is the only label she’ll be caught dead in. And when it comes to all other forms of design, Clémence, who with her husband, Didier, owns Galerie Kreo in Paris’s Saint-Germain-des-Prés, is just as exacting in her taste. For more than 15 years, the couple has operated a sort of laboratory, allowing the world’s most uncompromising designers to explore their wildest—and, quite often, least commercially viable—ideas, developing them into exclusive pieces for the gallery. (Another translation: *Kreo* means “creation” in Esperanto.) Produced in editions of eight to 12, these series have included colorful Drag-onfly coffee tables by Hella Jongerius; Konstantin Grcić’s sexy, industrial

Man Machine glass shelf that adjusts with the aid of a pneumatic piston; and elemental stacking tables in cool Carrara marble by Jasper Morrison. The Krzentowskis are not just dealers; they are also consummate collectors (their first show, in 1999, was made up of pieces they had acquired in duplicate by designers like Pierre Paulin, Joe Colombo, and Verner Panton). Over the years, Didier has amassed a significant trove of 20th-century lighting, a selection of which was on view in the Paris gallery earlier this year as part of the exhibition “La Luce Vita” (Clémence is flanked here by a 1958 pendant light by Gino Sarfatti and a 1965 lamp by Etienne Fermigier) and also at the couple’s recently opened London outpost, where a single designer took the spotlight. Clémence, it seems, isn’t the only one with a favorite: “Sarfatti was a real genius and innovator,” she says. “And he’s Didier’s hero!”

KRZENTOWSKI: HAIR BY BENEDECITE CAZALU-BREDET AT ARTLIST; MAKEUP BY GEORGIS PYPTIS FOR CALLISTE; FASHION ASSISTANT: AIZANE PEENARD

SELLERS: HAIR AND MAKEUP BY CAROLYN GALLER FOR MAC COSMETICS AT CLM HAIR & MAKE-UP; FASHION ASSISTANT: WOTTEK WARZECHA



This page: Sellers wears a Marco de Vincenzo dress; her own Marni sandals. Styled by Gianluca Longo. Opposite: Krzentowski wears an Azzedine Alaïa jacket, skirt, and sandals; her own Vanrycke Paris earrings and Reposi ring. Styled by Omaima Salem. For stores, prices, and more, go to Wmag.com/design-gallerists.

LIBBY SELLERS London “Design is a conduit for storytelling,” says Libby Sellers, who for the past 14 years has been capitalizing on its narrative possibilities—first as a senior curator at London’s Design Museum, where she organized significant shows on such diverse subjects as the graphic designer Peter Saville and the society florist Constance Spry, and then as a dealer and the founder of her eponymous Berners Street gallery, where her idiosyncratic roster included concept-driven talents like Formafantasma, Max Lamb, Stuart Haygarth, and Moritz Waldemeyer. Scouring design fairs across the globe and serving on juries, Sellers often encounters a work before she meets the person who made it, and so she is naturally attracted to the kinds of outgoing pieces that announce something unique about themselves. (The same might be

said of her fashion sense.) She’s photographed here with *Thread Wrapping Architecture 290414*, a 2014 installation she commissioned from Anton Alvarez, a young Swedish-Chilean designer of particular yarn-spinning prowess: He developed a machine that creates chairs, tables, and all manner of objects functional and decorative by binding the component parts together in countless yards of colored thread coated in glue. Currently, Sellers is adding a new chapter to her own story. Having realized the limitations of running a white cube space—and faced with the fact the her building is slated for demolition—she’s looking to reinvent her role in the design world. She will still represent the young stars whose careers she has helped nurture, only “less like a gallerist and more like an agent.” ♦