



233 RUE ST HONORE 75001 PARIS  
T +33(0)1 4271 2046  
www.favoriparis.com  
amy@favoriparis.com

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## Six Paris Flea Regulars on What the Just-Reopened Market Means to Them

Pierre Yovanovitch and others chat about the enduring importance of *Les Puces* in a post-coronavirus world



Paul Bert Serpette, a privately owned Paris market. Photo: Courtesy of Paul Bert Serpette

First established in the 1860s, the [Paris flea market](#) is an undoubted collector's paradise. Earlier this year, *Les Puces*, as the market is often referred to in French, closed for the first time since World War II in the wake of the [coronavirus](#) pandemic. Now, dealers and visitors alike are returning, helping to bring one of the City of Light's most popular attractions back to (socially distanced) life. Stephanie Duplaix, director of [Paul Bert Serpette](#), tells AD PRO: "On an average, we typically have 5,000–6,000 visitors over a nice weekend. The first day we reopened there were 1,500 people and we knew all of them." Market owner Jean-Cyrille Boutmy adds, "We will start virtual visits through our website this summer and I am optimistic we will find our public again. It's difficult for the dealers right now, but people still find things and there are sales." Recently, AD PRO visited the *marché* to check out the scene, and reached out to a handful of market regulars to hear their thoughts on the institution's past, future, and present. Below is what they have to say.



### Antiques Dealer Alexandre Biaggi

Well-known Left Bank dealer [Alexandre Biaggi](#) started at the Flea Market with a stand in Paul Bert in the 1980s. "I still love the *Puces* and I love to go! I go to buy professionally, but also, personally. I go about twice a month and there are several young dealers I like a great deal. I recently bought an officer's bed in steel from the 19th century. It's not my specialty, but I couldn't resist!"

### Architect Charles Zana

[AD100 architect Charles Zana](#) never misses a weekend at the *Puces*. "I used to work there every weekend when I was a student and I have seen a whole generation of great dealers start there like Laffanour, Biaggi, and Aline Chastel. The *Puces* is always moving, with young dealers and trends often start there. It will be there tomorrow. A unique utopia in Paris!"

### Christophe Comoy of Luis Laplace

Christophe Comoy, a partner at [AD100 designer Luis Laplace's](#) firm, says, "We go at least once a week when we are in Paris. We have found countless pieces for all of our projects, and we have already been twice since it reopened. Everyone seems in good spirits and the dealers have access to specific sources of antiques not easily available to the rest of us. Not everything can be sourced online."



A chair Pierre Yovanovitch recently found at Paul Bert Serpette.

Photo: Courtesy of Pierre Yovanovitch

### **Interior Designer Pierre Yovanovitch**

Although he hasn't been able to go back yet, [AD100 designer Pierre Yovanovitch](#) says, "I can't wait! I'm a compulsive buyer, so when I go, I'm not looking for anything in particular. Although there is competition with the auction houses and galleries, there are always gold nuggets to find. There is a sense of discovery and desire to purchase. . . magic in all of the little stands that does not exist anywhere else."

### **Linda Pinto of Alberto Pinto Interior Design**

Linda Pinto, head of [Alberto Pinto Interior Design](#), shares, "I try to go to the flea market as often as possible. It is the best place to find unusual pieces with a strong decorative effect. I always end up finding a good surprise, an inspiring object, furniture or work of art. I have been once since they reopened and the ambiance was wonderful with fantastic weather making it feel already like summer. My only regret was the brasserie Ma Cocotte was still closed. I think the flea market will be around forever because it is part of Paris' patrimony and heritage."

### **Artist and Collector Johan Creten**

Artist and collector Johan Creten says, "We come every weekend when we are in Paris, for the past 30 years! There are always new areas to discover and explore and yes, we came the first weekend it reopened and every weekend since. As to the future, I hope it continues, otherwise, what am I going to do on weekends?"