

Exhibition
at Galerie Downtown / Paris

from Friday 11 March to Saturday 16 April 2022
Opening event on Thursday 10 March 2022

18, rue de Seine 75006 Paris

**The new exhibition at Laffanour Galerie Downtown/Paris will feature three designers and one editor who have made a significant impact on the post-war world:
Charlotte Perriand, Pierre Jeanneret, Jean Prouvé and Georges Blanchon.**



Charlotte Perriand (1903 - 1999)
"Candilis" corner desk, 1951
H72 x L128 x P92 cm

At the end of the war, France was divided into administrative regions that required major recovery plans, partly supported by the Marshall Plan, this was the period of Reconstruction. It was in this context of the immediate post-war years that Charlotte Perriand, Pierre Jeanneret, Jean Prouvé and Georges Blanchon supported the development of the B.C.C. (Bureau Central de Construction), based in Grenoble.

Originally founded in 1939 by Charlotte Perriand, Pierre Jeanneret, Jean Prouvé and Georges Blanchon under the name of B.C.C. (Bureau Central de Construction), which proposed the creation of prefabricated buildings, followed by proposals for interior design.

The period 1939-1944, which was calm, was nevertheless marked by two decisive constructions: the prefabricated buildings for the S.C.A.L. company in Issoire (1939-1940) where Charlotte Perriand also made furniture, and the B.C.C. houses in Saint-Auban (1941-42).

From that time onwards, a number of pieces of furniture appeared, including the *paillé* armchair, the *paillé* four-legged stool and the triangular pedestal table, some of which were used by the BCC and in the design of Mériber. For her part, Charlotte Perriand also designed a large 'shaped' desk with a pedestal and a sideboard with double sliding doors for her home.

In the aftermath of the war, Charlotte Perriand - who had returned from Asia in 1946 - began to work on a number of projects that were close to her heart, including the launch of a furniture series. Drawing on her experience in Asia, as an advisor in Japan for two years, then her research and production work in Indochina, Charlotte Perriand thought with Pierre Jeanneret - whom she had met again - about sober, minimal, simple but above all functional and useful furniture. After intensive research in financing and production, the BCC produced a first edition of furniture : *Equipement de la Maison - Meubles de Charlotte Perriand et Pierre Jeanneret*.



Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999)
Cowhide skin Armchair, 1950
H82 x L62 x P65 cm



Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999)
BCB Library, 1949
H156 x L164 x P36 cm

This wood edition includes all the furniture needed for interior design, from dining tables, seats and coffee tables to desks, storage units and bookcases. The first edition of the collection featured furniture such as desks in unfinished wood, usually pine, and chests with aluminium doors. Then a second edition around 1949 with furniture in ash, often with ash veneer. It should be noted that the publishing contract at the time also allowed each of them to work independently, since at the same time Pierre Jeanneret was an architect and Charlotte Perriand a decorator: Charlotte Perriand therefore produced other interior fittings under her own name.

At the time, this furniture was often presented in showcase flats, such as the Unité d'Habitation in Marseille, the standard housing units in Toulon or the Maison Minimum at the *Exposition Internationale de l'Habitation, Exposition 'Formes Utiles'...*

In the end, this edition was not always easy, due specifically to the post-war context. In 1949, Georges Blanchon decided to leave the Grenoble office, given the lack of perspective and ambition. That same year, the collaboration between Perriand and Jeanneret came to an end, while Pierre Jeanneret was already looking towards Chandigarh to build the capital of Punjab with Le Corbusier. The BCC stopped in 1952, while Georges Blanchon created the same year the B.C.B. (Bureau de Coordination du bâtiment) and took over the editions until the 1960s. The furniture was distributed by the Steph Simon Gallery, which also published Charlotte Perriand's and Jean Prouvé's new furniture at the time.



François Laffanour © DePasquale+Maffini

Since its opening in the early 1980s, the Downtown Gallery, created by François Laffanour, has explored, shown and rehabilitated a little-known field of 20th century architectural furniture.

In the aftermath of the Second World War, designers and architects brought a different conception of the art of furnishing, dictated by a need for freedom and efficiency, in the service of a new art of living in an era of technological and scientific development.

The Downtown Gallery also holds the archives of the Steph Simon Gallery which, from 1956 to 1974, represented and published the furniture of Charlotte Perriand, Jean Prouvé, Serge Mouille, Georges Jouve and Isamu Noguchi.

