

Exhibition  
*Steph Simon (1956 - 1974)*  
*Retrospective*

at Laffanour - Downtown Gallery / Paris  
from Thursday 13 October to Saturday 26 November 2022  
Opening on Thursday 13 October 2022

Laffanour - Downtown Gallery / Paris presents an exhibition that retraces the adventure of the Steph Simon's gallery, one of the legendary galleries of the post-war Design scene. Steph Simon was involved with designers such as Charlotte Perriand, Jean Prouvé, Isamu Noguchi and defended, edited and distributed their work to the public. Aware of the importance of Steph Simon's role, François Laffanour acquired the gallery's archives in 2001 including photos of exhibitions, purchase invoices, order forms and deposits. Above all, the archives boast plans of interior design studies with iconic pieces such as Jean Prouvé's *Présidence* desk, the bookcase *Nuage* and the table *Forme Libre* by Charlotte Perriand. François Laffanour has since become the custodian of its memory. This exhibition will allow visitors to measure the importance and the active role of Steph Simon.

Steph Simon was known as an editor and dealer of designers such as Charlotte Perriand, Jean Prouvé, Serge Mouille, Georges Jouve or Isamu Noguchi. In 1956, in the heart of the historical district of Saint-Germain-des-Près (145, boulevard Saint-Germain), he opened his eponymous gallery that quickly became a real reference on the French and International Design scene. He established exclusive contracts with innovative architects and designers and founded a design office for special orders (bookcases, chests, storage furniture...). The office remained open from 1956 to 1960 and initiated several unique pieces, which have become iconic pieces of post-war Design.



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Charlotte Perriand, Bookcase « Nuage », 1958



© archives Steph Simon

Steph Simon Gallery, interior view

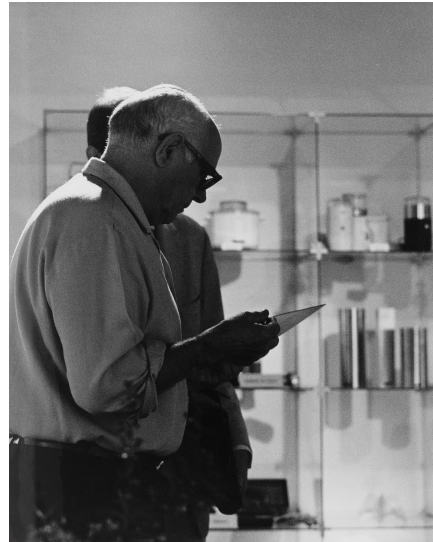
The scenographies of the exhibitions at Steph Simon's gallery were designed by Charlottes Perriand, highlighting not only the furniture, but also the lighting fixtures by Isamu Noguchi, the ceramic cylinders by Georges Jouve, the stoneware vases by Jean and Norbert Pierlot and Pierre Roulot's ceramics discovered over the years. The Steph Simon gallery embodied the era of Reconstruction: a new generation of architects and designers driven by a pacifist and innovative spirit.

About Steph Simon :

In 1947 Steph Simon became co-founder of Fosima, a commercial company specializing in industrial construction elements, which he later left to join STUDAL, a subsidiary of *Aluminium français*. In 1949, he became the license holder of *Ateliers Jean Prouvé* in order to develop and sell furniture with offices located at 52, avenue des Champs-Élysées. It was through these offices that Steph Simon established a solid connection with the major architects of the Reconstruction. He closed his offices around 1955 in order to open the gallery in December 1955, which was finally delayed until March 1956.



© archives Steph Simon  
Flyer - Ateliers Jean Prouvé

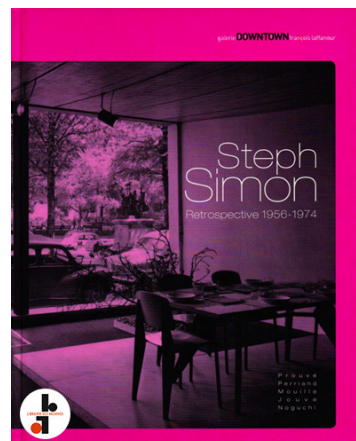


© archives Steph Simon  
Steph Simon in his gallery

Steph Simon participated in few professional fairs, however he used to exhibit at the *Salon des Arts Ménagers* in 1958, in the section *Foyer d'aujourd'hui* which was an important place for contemporary design at that time. It took some thirty years until the name Steph Simon reappeared on the artistic scene and found its nobility thanks to François Laffanour. Following the acquisition of the archives in 2001, a first retrospective was organized in 2005 accompanied by the publishing of the book « Steph Simon. Retrospective (1956 - 1974) » which retraces the development of Steph Simon's career and reveals some of his archives. Today, 17 years later, the Laffanour - Downtown Gallery / Paris finds it relevant to reassert its position as the heir to the rights of Steph Simon's archives.



© archives Steph Simon  
Steph Simon Gallery, exterior view



© Laffanour - Downtown Gallery / Paris  
2007  
130 pages, 24,5 cm x 30,5 cm



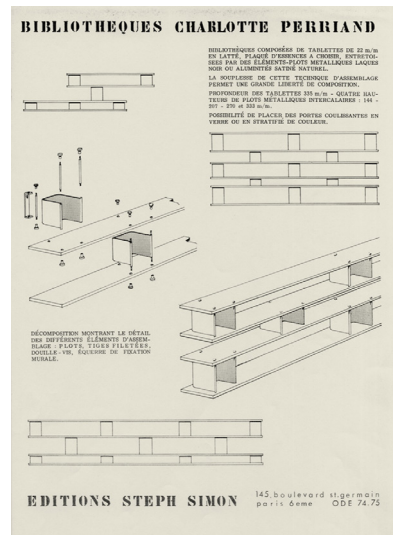
Steph Simon Gallery, exterior view  
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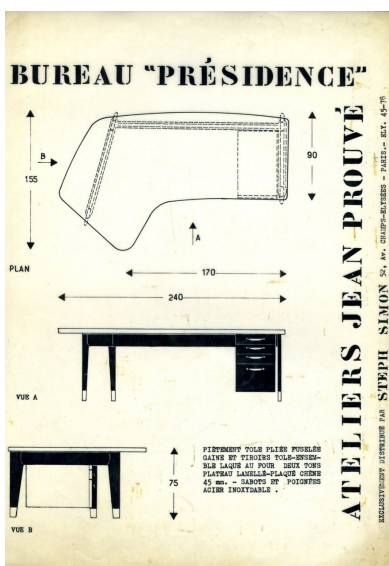
Steph Simon Gallery, interior view  
© archives Steph Simon



Charlotte Perriand  
Bookcase « Nuage »  
1958  
H. 71 x L. 361 x P. 33,6 cm.



Advertising flyer for the bookcase « Nuage »  
by Charlotte Perriand  
© archives Steph Simon



Advertising flyer for the desk « Présidence »  
by Jean Prouvé  
© archives Steph Simon



Jean Prouvé  
Desk « Présidence », 1956  
H. 74,5 x L. 246 x P. 147 cm



François Laffanour © DePasquale+Maffini

Since its opening in the early 1980s, the Downtown Gallery / Paris, 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.

