

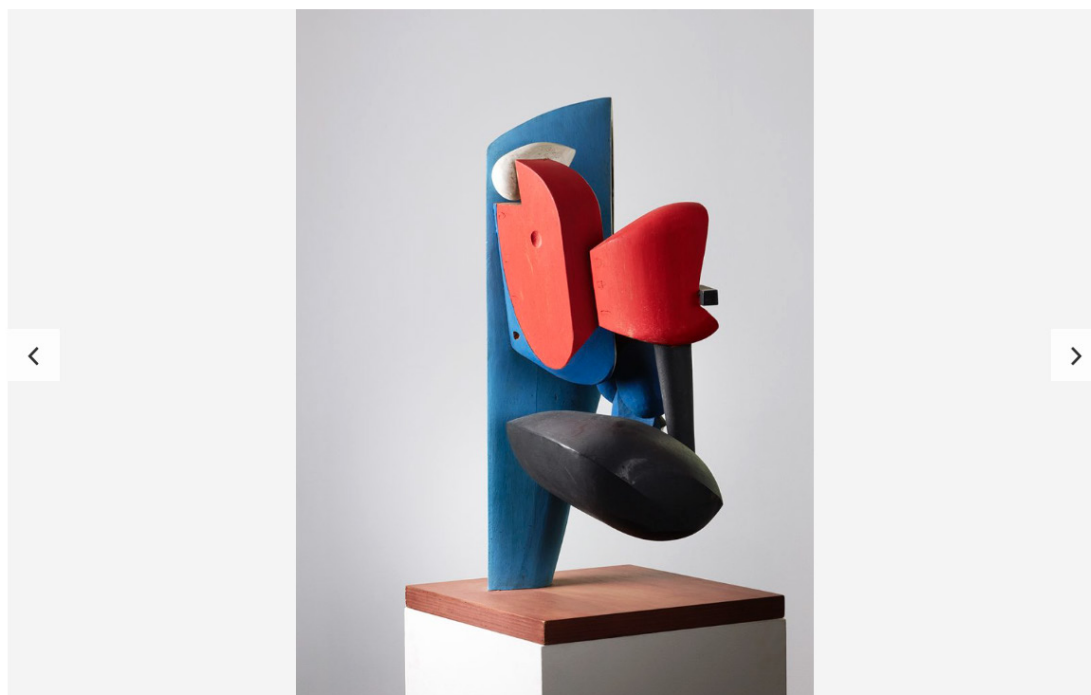
ARCHITECTURE, INTERIORS | BY BETTY WOOD

Discover the furniture of Le Corbusier's collaborator Joseph Savina at Laffanour/ Galerie Downtown Paris

Cult design outpost Laffanour/ Galerie Downtown Paris is spotlighting the work of master furniture designer Joseph Savina this month and exploring his creative relationship with Le Corbusier.

The *Joseph Savina L'avant-garde Bretonne* exhibition opens on 8 February 2024 at the gallery's Paris showroom. It celebrates the designer's 'folk art' and his connection to modernist Brittany – the intersecting point for marine, Christian, Celtic, and 20th-century modernist traditions.

Savina was born into a family of cabinetmakers in Douarnenez in 1901. He worked alongside carpenter and sculptor Jean Le Picard until he opened his workshop on rue Saint-Andre in Tréguier. In 1929, he was named 'French Craftsman of the Year' for his intriguing version of Breton folk art. He eschewed the 'decorative picturesqueness' of traditional Breton production, preferring to highlight 'clean construction lines' inspired by the early modernist movement. This combination earned him the moniker the 'wood embroiderer'.



Le Corbusier, *Ozon Opus I* sculpture
1947. Polychrome wood.

Monogrammed and dated at the bottom at the back "J. Savina". Image courtesy Laffanour Galerie Downtown.

Throughout the 1920s, Savina was involved with the 'Seiz Breur' (Seven Brothers) group of artists founded by Jeanne Malivel. Savina was drawn to the avant-garde movement's rejection of local artistic conventions and advocacy for contemporary furniture design, which echoed his own sensibilities.

Among the items exhibited at [Laffanour / Galerie Downtown Paris](#) is a set of eight wooden chairs carved in 1950 with a Celtic-inspired circular motif and a wooden cabinet circa 1929-1931 decorated with triangular metal places. Savina produced stylised furniture carved with palmettes and volutes that reflected Seiz Breur's vision of 'decorative modernism' – curated flourishes that highlight craftsmanship without detracting from the overall form of the furniture.

The centrepiece of the show is Savina's abstract *Ozon Opus* sculpture, created in 1947 in a unique collaboration with Le Corbusier.

Savina struck up a friendship with Le Corbusier in 1935 and was quickly enamoured with the architect's modernist ideas. The pair exchanged correspondence throughout the 30s and 40s. They collaborated on projects such as Le Corbusier's masterpiece, the Chapelle Notre-Dame-du-Haut in Ronchamp in 1953, where Savina designed the church doors, cross, benches and high altar for the modernist cathedral.

See highlights from the show in the gallery above.

Joseph Savina L'avant-garde bretonne runs until 2 March at Laffanour/ Galerie Downtown Paris, 18 rue de Seine, 75006 Paris



Joseph Savina, cupboard, 1961. Carved and polychromed oak, brass escutcheons and frames. Signed 'J. Savina'. Image courtesy Laffanour Galerie Downtown



Joseph Savina, cabinet, circa 1929-1931. Wooden cabinet decorated with triangular metal plates. Image courtesy Laffanour Galerie Downtown.