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PARDON MY FRENCH

Bonjour et bienvenue to this week's dispatch, our Paris Déco Off and Maison&Objet special. We start with a French toast to the art deco movement in the form of **Paris interiors studio Coutansais Castillo's first collection** of limited-edition furniture (*pictured*). Then we talk textiles with the founder of Garro Éditions, **Héloïse Garro**, take a seat at the **modernist desk** that steeled itself against the tastes of the time and peruse a new installation at **Liaigre's second Parisian showroom**. First out of the Métro and into the City of Light is Monocle's design editor, Nic Monisse.

OPINION: [NIC MONISSE](#)

Setting the scene

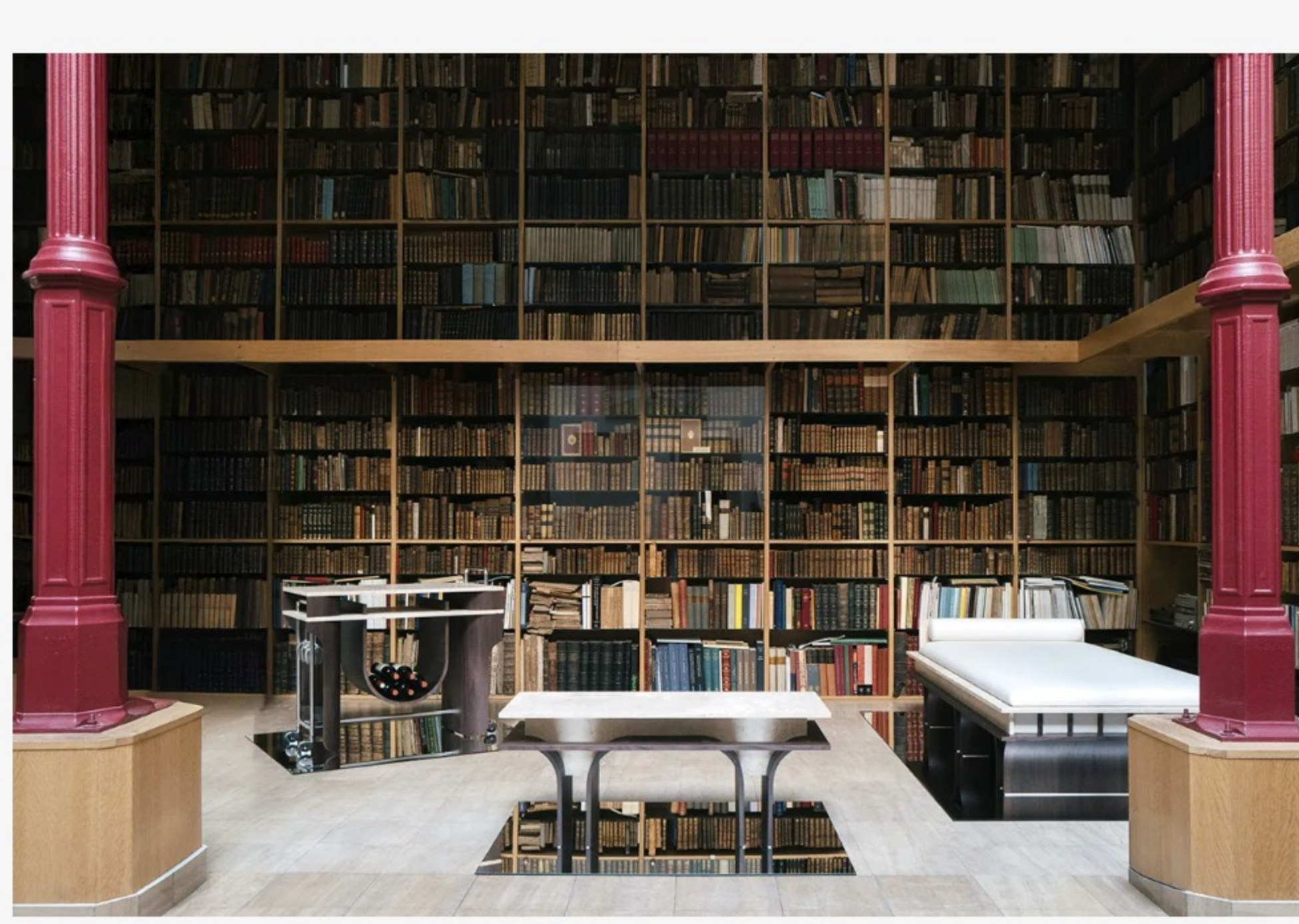
The design industry's year kicks into gear this week in the French capital. Paris Déco Off, which starts today and focuses on textiles and wallpapers, will see exhibitions and product launches take place in showrooms across the city. Featuring name brands and smaller makers, it complements one of the industry's largest trade shows, Maison&Objet, taking place in the halls of the Nord Villepinte Exhibition Centre. Here, we take the creative scene's temperature with five of the week's exhibitors.

John Pomp at Triode Gallery, 28 Rue Jacob

There's a back-to-school energy in Paris as old friends catch up post holidays and new introductions are made – a boon for designers such as John Pomp and a reminder that in-person events remain important for the creative community. “We are prioritising personal connections,” says Pomp. In Paris, he'll meet clients and potential partners at Triode Gallery, where he's showing new work. “Paris Déco Off has become a destination for the international community to celebrate and share inspiring pieces. Many US clients come here and it's a pivotal moment for us to connect with them and others from all around the world – France, the UK, Spain, Russia, Germany and Japan.”

Haydn von Werp at Librairie Michel Bouvier, 14 Rue Visconti

As much as material innovation is lauded, knowing when to use a specific material is important. It's something that Haydn von Werp is executing perfectly in his new furniture collection, Arcus. “For my designs, materials are allowed to speak through their inherent qualities: stone for its gravity, wood for its warmth, metal for its precision,” says Von Werp. “Balance, rhythm, weight and clarity have endured because they respond to us in the same way that cities such as Paris or Rome do. The shapes [of the Arcus collection] are simple because they come from buildings and ideas that people already know.”

**Pierre Frey at 47 Rue des Petits Champs**

For brands such as Pierre Frey – a French design house renowned for its fabrics, wallpapers and custom-made rugs – Paris Déco Off is key: it's the most significant event that focuses on the sectors of the design industry that the 90-year-old family firm specialises in. This week it will show its new collection alongside a performance by fresco artist Raphaël Schmitt. “Innovation in our sector lies in the dialogue between heritage and experimentation: new fibres, sustainable processes, digital tools and renewed interest in artisanal techniques, especially in wallpapers,” says communications director Pierre Frey. “The future of interiors will be increasingly tactile, narrative and responsible.”

Sandra Benhamou at Galerie Dina Vierny, 36 Rue Jacob

The lines between art and design are becoming increasingly blurry. It's something that Sandra Benhamou is capturing with her exhibition *As de Rêve* – a showcase at Galerie Dina Vierny that presents her furniture alongside works curated by the gallery. “Art nourishes the imagination, opening emotional and conceptual territories, while design translates that emotion into something tangible and lived-in,” says Benhamou. “Together, they enrich one another: art brings depth and narrative, while design brings presence, intimacy and duration.”

**Toyine Sellers at Hästens, 52 Rue de l'Université**

Craft's resilience – and resurgence – has been well documented. Despite being defined by the use of the human hand, we're still seeing new machines and materials applied to the creation of furniture and objects. South African-born, France-and-Sweden-based textile artist Toyine Sellers is turning that idea on its head. “Using traditional looms is fundamental to my practice because they embody a deep history of knowledge and skill, and operate at a different pace – one that privileges the journey over the destination,” says Sellers, who is presenting her first outdoor collection this week. “Opportunities for material and textile innovation come from pushing traditional techniques into new contexts. By using historic looms and methods in unexpected ways, new textures and functions can emerge without losing the integrity of craft.”

Nic Monisse is Monocle's design editor. For more on Paris's outstanding creative community, head to [monocle.com](#) to read our report on its impressive design ecosystem. And don't forget to consult our [Paris City Guide](#).