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OCTOBER 2002 £3.30

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BUY BUY BUY!

So, you want to play the markets, but you're not sure where to begin? How about a Dutch painting, a retro chair, a sculptural lamp or a few tribal artefacts? Hubert Zandberg shows Kim Hervo how to find a *pièce de résistance* at the Paris flea markets. Photographs by Andrew Lamb





Clockwise from left: Kim Herson and Hubert Zandberg at a street stand on Rue Paul Bert, Café accessories in Marché Malassis, Frédéric Daniel's eclectic shop, Gilles Oudin's 'Industrial' stall

Best for —
ANTIQUES
 Above and right: Christian Sapet's house in Marché Paul Bert. Below: Gilles Oudin's stall

When interior designer and fanatical collector Hubert Zandberg met *Harpers & Queen* editor-at-large Kim Herson in Cape Town, she told him that many people were intimidated by the idea of antiques shopping in fleamarkets because they didn't know their way around, and had neither a trained eye nor insider knowledge.

So Hubert suggested an eye-opening trip to the exciting stands in Paris, and assured her she would not go home empty-handed. She didn't — among her purchases over the two days they spent scouring *Les Puces* were lamps, drawings and model boats. Here, Kim gets the lowdown on the flea market bug.

Where should I go and when? The 12 very different markets at Saint-Ouen are open from Saturday to Monday, although the 'trade' is known to go on Friday mornings. Mondays are hit-and-miss, it is more a day

for the transport companies and shippers to buy for their collections. Stalls open at dawn, and later when the weather is bad.

Because there are many different markets within close proximity of one another, Paris provides the opportunity to feast your eyes on, and make purchases from, a wide range of objects and furniture. You will find everything from French, Dutch and Scandinavian antiques to modernist furniture and generic French country pieces, plus accessories, unusual household items and artworks. There is also a wide selection of second-hand goods and fun bric-a-brac. **How much time should I allow?** I usually allow for a full day, with the option of going back the following day (sometimes it's good to sleep on a decision). Do your favourite markets on the first morning, while you are feeling fresh. After lunch, dip into a few more for some unexpected finds and discover new stalls. After a few visits, you will learn to spot the best places.

Which dealers do you recommend? By far my favourite market is Marché Paul Bert, 18 rue Paul Bert, Saint-Ouen. I, along with many other dealers, consider Christian Sapet (Stall 81-his) to be among the very best stall-holders. Christian specialises in arts and crafts, but his unusual eye and exquisite taste allows him to amass amazing collections of objects and furniture in his rambling stall, and in his small house hidden in the market, which I have visited on a few occasions — it's a collector's dream.

Another highly respected stall belongs to Gilles Oudin (Allée 3, Stand 149), a dealer offering handsome, fresh industrial pieces with great decorative impact, such as factory tables from the Twenties and Thirties. For 20th-century design and pop art, I like Bruno Racé-Madoux. His stand and small house in the market are a fabulous showcase for Fifties and Sixties furniture and accessories. Other good dealers in this 'epoch' are Alain Depouze (Allée 3, Stand 110) and



Best for ...
INDUSTRIAL STYLE
Above right: Michel Peraches and Eric Mielé's stall in Marché Paul Bert

Left: stall-fronts on Rue Paul Bert. Above: framed insects in Sébastien Ollivier's La Petite Maison. Right: Seventies market in Marché des Rosiers

Benjamin Bailon (Allée 6, Stand 93) for modernist furniture, and, close by, Albert Toulhet for retro furniture and accessories.

I often buy from Christine Tallmar (Allée 4, Stand 199), a good source of industrial lighting, that most useful decorative accessory which mixes well with most styles. There's more industrial furniture and accessories at Michael Peraches and Eric Mielé's stall (Stand 11, Allée 1). Directly opposite is Michel Morin (Allée 1, Stand 10) for good Provençal accessories and furniture, as well as art and crafts pieces with a rustic French atmosphere. Hervé Bouraly (Allée 4, Stand 166) offers some good-quality original African art, a genre with great decorative impact that mixes well with both antiques and contemporary environments.

What, in your opinion, is the latest big trend in the markets? Good-quality modernist furniture, especially the most amazing – and still inexpensive – Seventies furniture, art and accessories. Young dealers in tune with

current trends have just opened the exciting Marché des Rosiers on the first floor at 3 rue Paul Bert, where you will find originals from Paulin and Mourgue, plus known and unknown Seventies items. African and Oceanic artefacts are still popular, and quality is on the rise – but so are the prices.

What are things to keep in mind when considering a purchase? Inspect the quality of the object (especially pieces of furniture) carefully: turn it upside down, and look for cracks, damage and woodworm. Check the hallmark, if there is one. Mentally, try to take the piece out of the market context, and visualise it in your house. Some objects look best in their market environment, surrounded by objects of similar age and style, whereas others take on a new lease of life when taken out of context and placed somewhere completely different: ie, your home. Consult photos, and note the dimensions of your rooms when you are considering a piece of furniture. Finally, trust your first

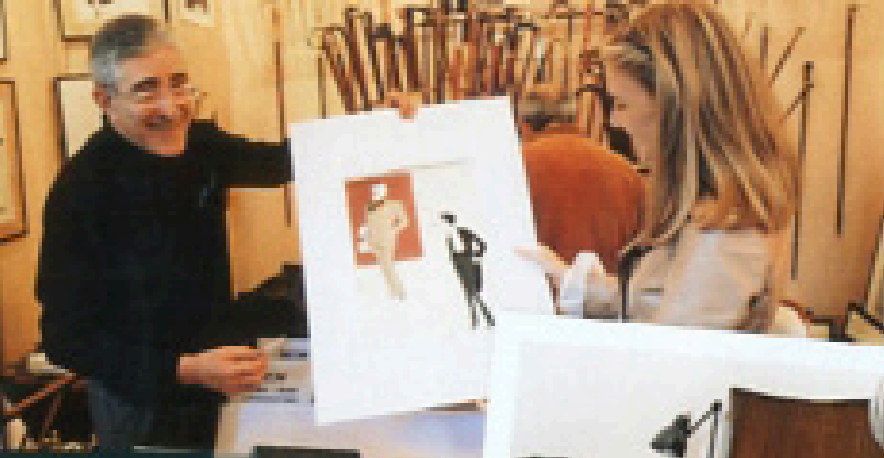
instinct: it usually comes straight from the heart. Would you lose sleep over a certain object? If so, you absolutely must have it.

Do you have any tips on negotiating a purchase? Always haggle: it is part of the market experience, and the best way to achieve a fair price for buyer and seller. The process should be carried out in an atmosphere of respect for the stallholder and the merchandise (do not insult the object by pretending that it is worthless to get a better deal), and confidence and seriousness on the part of the buyer. You should aim to knock about 10 per cent off the given price. With a bit of hard work and skill, an additional 20–30 per cent can be achieved. Dealers sometimes get 40 per cent, but leave that to the professionals. Always keep it in good spirit and know when to stop. Proof of export outside the EU, where VAT is not applicable, will give an additional discount. **How should I pay?** Cash, as ever, is king. Dealers also accept French cheques without

AT HOME



Top left: modernist furniture in Marché Paul Bert. Above: print specialist Bernard Lazarowicz showing Kim his collection in Marché Dauphine. Bottom right: Michel Morin's stand. Left: browsing at Alban Tréher's stall in Marché Paul Bert.



Best for ...

SEVENTIES STYLE

Above: Christine Telmer's stand in Marché Paul Bert. Below left: Seventies market in Marché des Roisiers.

hesitation, but credit cards are impractical and unpopular. Professional buyers and regulars to the market use a convenient system whereby your shipper (ie, Hedley's Hampers) provide you with a purchase book with order forms in triplicate (one for the dealer, one for the shipper and one for you). A money transfer (plus a small handling charge) to the shipper for the full amount of your purchases will enable the shipper to pay for and pick up the goods on your behalf before delivering it to your doorstep.

Which shops in Paris have that market feel? Some dealers at the market have permanent showrooms where they create a distinct market ambience with a particular mix of objects. Gilles Oudin, 20 avenue Trudaine (+33 1 48 74 04 34), has his own shop, as well as a stall, offering a mix of early industrial and modernist furniture and objects. La Petite Maison, 10 rue Paul Bert, Saint-Ouen (+33 1 40 10 56 65) is a beautifully styled shop within the market for decorative pieces and good table lamps. Frédéric

Daniel Antiquités, 9 rue Ravignion (+33 1 42 59 63 68) is always worth visiting. This shop is crammed with eccentric pieces, including lighting made from natural materials such as leather, metal and wood. For great Americana, and pop art from the Fifties to the Eighties, visit Fiesta Galerie, 45 rue Vieille du Temple (+33 1 49 71 53 54). Hidden in the sixth arrondissement (4 rue Visconti) is Jean Edouard Carlier's *Voyageurs et Curieux*: an unusual array of primitive African and Oceanic artefacts.

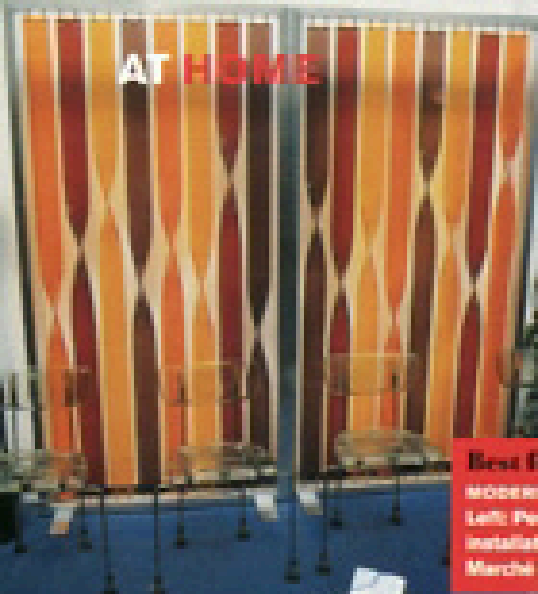
Where are the best places to eat? Le Baron, 85 rue des Roisiers (+33 1 40 12 65 65), where I often take special clients, is the choicest restaurant in the market. Remember to book when you arrive at the market in the morning, because it is a popular choice. Le Petite Landais, 96 rue des Roisiers (+33 1 49 45 11 55) is great for coffee in the morning before you start at Paul Bert. La Brasserie Baron, 120 avenue Michel (+33 1 40 11 68 71), is popular with locals and dealers, and has become quite an institution.

Where can I stay? I favour a small boutique hotel on the Left Bank, which is just a 15-minute taxi ride from the markets. Hotel Bel-Air, 7-11 rue Saint Benoît (+33 1 42 61 53 53), is also surrounded by a number of antique shops.

How do I get to the markets if I'm not staying nearby? Head for Saint-Ouen by taking the Metro to Porte de Clignancourt. (The map overleaf indicates the best markets to visit once you get there.)

How do I commission a guide? Contact either Hubert Zardberg (07956 609118) or Finch (020 7321 7411), who will take people round the markets for a fee.

Who are the most reliable shippers, and where do I find them? Hedley's Hampers (020 8965 8733) and Alan Franklin Transport (0208 826539) are both shipping companies that are permanently on standby in the market. They are both specialists, and are well equipped to deal with the demands of moving all manner of merchandise to anywhere in the world.



Best for ...
MODERN ART
Left: Perpetua
installation in
Marché Malassis



Clockwise from left: Christine
Talmant's stall; Key-ring
specialist François Chappay's
stall in Marché Vernaison.
Bricage at La Petite Maison.
Transport stall in Marché
Paul Bert, Hubert and Kim
in Marché Paul Bert, Seventies
market in Marché des Rosiers



Trading tips Collecting is easy, once you know where to begin

GETTING STARTED A great collection will have merit in itself, over and above the individual objects; it should have a point of view. In my opinion, the collector who buys only what he can afford is no collector at all. The serious collector overdoes it, and often overbids at auction. However, some of the most powerful collections cost very little or nothing at all. Objects can simply be chosen for their intrinsic beauty. Go and 'shop' on the beach or in the countryside. Anything can become a collection; the obvious driving forces, such as function, history, period, culture and fashion can be replaced by abstract themes: form, texture, material.

QUALITY VERSUS QUANTITY Powerful display statements can be achieved with large collections of fun items (my favourite is my collection of Sobies and Seventies caravan touring flags). But more serious collections can actually be improved by 'shedding' – that is, selling a number of less significant pieces to acquire something you really want, thereby creating a more focused and important collection. □

