

# VENUS

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## MANHATTAN

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A LOT OF CHARLOTTE

# Charlotte Perriand furniture on view in New York City

By WILLIAM MENKING • November 26, 2018

Design

East

On View



Charlotte Perriand + Le Corbusier, "Cuisine-bar Marseille," 1952, aluminum, wood, plywood, variable dimensions.  
(Courtesy Venus Over Manhattan, New York, and Laffanour / Galerie Downtown, Paris)

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One of the great joys of the New York gallery scene is that we often get museum-quality shows in commercial galleries. This is the case with the current Charlotte Perriand exhibit at the Venus Over Manhattan gallery on Madison Avenue. Created in concert with Laffanour/Gallery Downtown from Paris, it is billed as “the largest exploration of Perriand’s production to be staged in New York,” and includes some 50 works spanning her nearly eight-decade career.

The New York exhibit follows a recent exhibition at the Centre Georges Pompidou’s *UAM, Une aventure moderne* that included the designer’s work, but if you did make the French exhibit this one can stand in as a tour de force of her life’s work. Perriand worked in the shadow of Le Corbusier for 10 years, but her career has been going through a well-deserved reassessment for some time by design historians and curators. This exhibit of her furniture and interior design looks beyond her important work in standardized architectural elements and highlights the influence of Japan, where she lived for six years (and was a design consultant to the Japanese Board of Trade), on her work and her freer form biomorphic designs.

The inclusion of bamboo, wood, and rush in her designs and the influence of Japanese wood detailing on her furniture shows her trying to break out of her earlier machine esthetic production. There are three examples of her six-sided table prototypes featured and you can see her seriously trying to create more thoughtful and practical furniture. This show is also a life survey, so it does include some of her “minimum existence designs” including her kitchens and bedrooms mocked up in full-scale models in the gallery. It is perhaps a bit sad that her wood furniture and metal cabinet pieces have been taken out of their original home, but these parts of residences can become dated and in need of restoration, so here they are in mocked up rooms from their French homes. The small bright yellow pass through doors for dairy deliveries takes us to the Unite.

*Charlotte Perriand* at [Venus Over Manhattan](#) runs through January 15.

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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William Menking is the Editor-in-Chief of The Architect's Newspaper.