



Tapis-siège, vers 1980, Wool, wood, PVC, 69 x 302 x 295 cm / 27 x 118.9 x 116 inches
Unique piece © Paulin, Paulin, Paulin
Courtesy of Artsa Consultancy. & © Paulin, Paulin, Paulin



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On Majlisism: spatial studies & prototypes by Pierre Paulin

May 22, 2024 - June 10, 2024 | Istanbul, Turkiye

Artsa Consultancy is pleased to present its collaboration with **Paulin Paulin Paulin**, a well-established furniture design brand, for the unveiling of **"On Majlisism: spatial studies & prototypes by Pierre Paulin"**, a new exhibition which will showcase the works of renowned designer **Pierre Paulin** for the first time in Turkiye. The exhibition, co-curated by Paulin, Paulin, Paulin and Selcan Atilgan, will take place at **Kucuk Mustafa Pasa Hammam** from **May 22 to June 10 2024**.

Paulin, Paulin, Paulin was founded as a family venture, centered around Maia Paulin, Pierre Paulin's wife and collaborator for over four decades. With a passion for travel and tireless dedication to research, Maia Paulin has always been committed to promoting, preserving, and disseminating Pierre Paulin's legacy. Benjamin Paulin, the son of Pierre and Maia Paulin, is married to Alice Lemoine, whose mother worked as a colorist for Paulin and was a close family friend. Together, Benjamin and Alice are driving forward this familial endeavor, channeling all their efforts into bridging generations and connecting with diverse communities through the special editions they produce for the first time. In doing so, they honor the aspirations articulated by Pierre Paulin in 2008.

A typology of its own, the majlis as we know it translates directly from Arabic to sitting room, with the concept of humble gathering at its core. Its scale varies from the most basic domestic function - hosting family and entertaining guests - to the grand scale of legislatures and administrative bodies deliberating over political and social affairs. Because of this, the word was later also adopted to mean "council" made up of elders and leaders in many Islamic countries and contexts. It is a space of the oral and aural; and learning and transmission of knowledge from elders to children happens through listening to stories, poetry and dialogue; and observing mannerisms and etiquette.

Architecturally, a majlis is composed of areas for seating - in a designed setting, these are simply cushioned backrests and armrests; an area to sit on the floor; and a shared space in the middle. This configuration can however be found in many different contexts - a group of chairs outside a convenience store where people share tea and neighbourhood news, a front porch or veranda - the gate to which is always open, or a circle for political debate in a radical bookstore, in which anyone can join. Majlis is also a verb, not unlike the way the term "salon" is used; what differentiates it from its western counterpart is perhaps that it is an integral part of life and the design of spaces in the contexts it is practised in. Majlis is one of those words that for me is potent architecturally - precisely because it is a half-noun, half-verb - it suggests an action and ritual and needs very little spatial prompts - but those spatial prompts make for very interesting design briefs.

The wisdoms of sitting close to the ground is familiar to so many cultures - South Asia, Africa, Japan, the Arab World and beyond, and has been a point of departure for Pierre Paulin's work from as early as the 1950s.

The prototype for Le Tapis-Siège by Pierre Paulin is simply formed by seatbacks on separate propped-up corners, connected by a common surface: a shared space in the centre for tea or a meal. Not unlike age-old mechanisms for bedouin majlis. Immediate resonances with so many similar settings from homes - a dastarkhan with my cousins in childhood; iftaar at a protest in Bo-Kaap, the Cape Malay quarter in Cape Town; a fish shop in Al-balad with friends a hundred times.



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Pierre Paulin's innovative concept of the "Tapis-Siège" (Rug-Seat) originated from a simple fold in a sheet of paper, inspired by traditional Japanese tatami and Liwan and Diwan furnishings. Although initially conceived in the late 1950s, it wasn't until 1968 that Paulin fully developed plans and a model as part of a modular project for Herman Miller, which unfortunately never materialized.

Despite his persistence, Paulin independently produced a simplified version of the Tapis-Siège for his family home on Rue des Ursulines in 1980. However, many of Paulin's visionary creations, including the Tapis-Siège, remained in prototype form due to the sole discretion of industrial partners and the absence of a supportive gallery market for designers.

Projects like Dune, Déclive, and Tapis-Siège, rejected by industrial partners, were only known and appreciated by a select few who visited Paulin's house privately. Fortunately, since 2014, exhibitions have provided broader access to Paulin's industrial utopias, generating significant interest from collectors and enthusiasts eager to see late versions of early prototypes brought to fruition, in accordance with Paulin's vision.



About Artist:

Pierre Paulin, born in Paris in 1927, was influenced early on by his uncle Georges Paulin, a renowned car designer, and his great-uncle Freddy Balthazar Stoll, a sculptor. Despite the constraints of his working-class upbringing, Paulin pursued his passion for design, studying at the Camondo Decorative Arts School in Paris.

Rejecting traditional teachings, Paulin immersed himself in the world of design, drawing inspiration from Scandinavian aesthetics and American designers like Eames and Bertoia. Unable to find a manufacturer for his furniture designs initially, he eventually showcased his creations at the Salon des Arts Ménagers, gaining recognition and collaborations with companies like Thonet-France and Artifort.

His tenure at Artifort allowed him to experiment with form and materials, resulting in iconic designs that remain in production today. Simultaneously, Paulin worked as an interior designer for prestigious clients and institutions, including the Louvre museum and President Pompidou.

In 1975, Paulin co-founded ADSA, a design agency that influenced product aesthetics and public spaces for over a decade. He later ventured into limited edition furniture collections, anticipating the rise of design collectibles.

In the 1990s, Paulin and his wife Maia established their creative retreat in the Cévennes region, where he found inspiration in nature and traditional craftsmanship. Despite facing initial challenges, Paulin's work gained widespread acclaim, leading him to express his desire to produce previously unrealized designs.

Paulin's legacy extends beyond his death in 2009, with his designs continuing to shape the world of furniture and interiors. His story is one of resilience, innovation, and artistic fulfillment, culminating in well-deserved recognition for his contributions to design.