

MASTERPIECES OF SHAKER DESIGN
(1820-1890)
BY FRANÇOIS LAPFANDUR & PHILIPPE SEGALOT
QUESTION WITH THE SHAKER MUSEUM IN MOUNT LEBANON

Le Style Shaker:

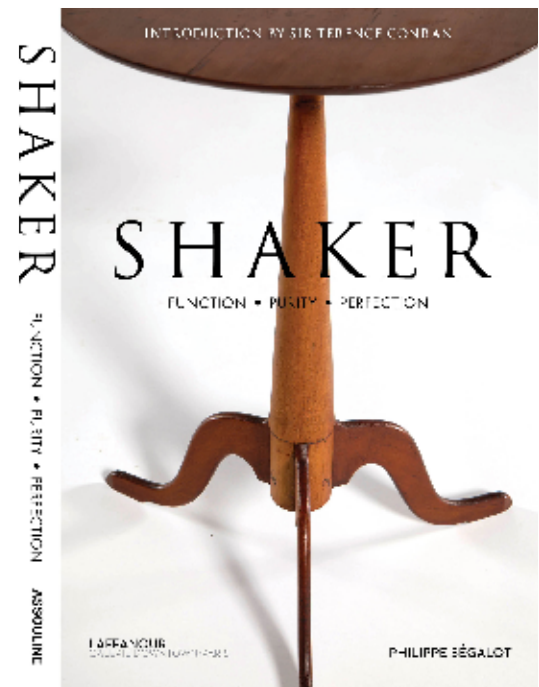
Will A Fresh View Stimulate The Market?

By Laura Beach



Previous Page: Working with the Shaker Museum in Mount Lebanon, N.Y., Philippe Ségalot, a New York dealer in contemporary art, and Francois Laffanour, a Parisian specialist in designer furniture, organized “Masterpieces of Shaker Design, 1820–1890” at the European Fine Art Fair in Maastricht in March. Included, left, was a 16-drawer counter and stove, both from Mount Lebanon and from the Shaker Museum. The chrome-yellow cupboard over 20 drawers, Harvard, Mass., or Canterbury, N.H., circa 1840, surfaced at the Winter Antiques Show in 2013 in the booth of Suzanne Courcier and Robert Wilkins. The 21-foot-long table is Enfield, N.H., circa 1840. Craftsman Tim Rieman made the peg rails.

MAASTRICHT, THE NETHERLANDS — When Terence Conran speaks, people listen. The British designer and lifestyle guru’s Habitat stores of the 1960s were the essence of London cool — white walls and bold color, clean lines and comfort. Knighted in 1983, Sir Terence is back to tell us that Shaker design



Published by Assouline in association with Laffanour and Ségalot, the 144-page book *Shaker: Function, Purity, Perfection* pairs 28 catalog entries with essays by David Stocks, Jerry Grant and Sir Terence Conran. It is billed as “an homage to the traditional Shaker values of grace and simplicity.”

Trestle table, Watervliet, circa 1840. Cherry, birch, maple, pine; 28½ by 134 by 42½ inches.



is hot. That will surprise some who remember the stardust years of the 1980s and 1990s, when celebrities were bidding up Shaker artifacts at auction. They might argue that it has been downhill ever since. That is why the decision of two top dealers in Modern and contemporary art and

design, Philippe Ségalot of New York and François Laffanour of Paris, to show Shaker furniture and accessories at The European Fine Art Fair (TEFAF) in March was both audacious and potentially transformative. The duo collaborated with Mount Lebanon, N.Y.'s Shaker

Museum, reinvigorated under the direction of president David Stocks, to organize “Masterpieces of Shaker Design, 1820–1890,” a combined loan and selling exhibition featuring roughly 30 examples of Shaker furniture and accessories, five borrowed from the Shaker Museum.

Laffanour and Ségalot organized the display into three discrete rooms. The exterior window, left, mounted on an outside wall of the stand, was loaned by the Shaker Museum, as was the chest over two drawers and the cast iron stove, both mid-Nineteenth Century and from Mount Lebanon. From the Andrews collection and auctioned by Skinner in 2014, the bench, circa 1820s, is from Mount Lebanon, as is the circa 1850–60 retiring room bed.





From left to right, candlestand, circa 1830s, and cupboard over six drawers, circa 1850s, both from Mount Lebanon. The circa 1840 trestle table is from Watervliet, N.Y.

Prices ranged from roughly \$9,000 to \$300,000. Though he declined to discuss sales, the fair, said Ségalot, was successful.

As a publicity gambit — and this was not the organizers' chief intention— it was genius. London's Economist magazine named Booth #605, in TEFAF's Design Section, one of the fair's two most ambitious "Shaker Style Shakes," proclaimed Le Figaro, heralding *le style Shaker* as "design before its time," prelude to work by the French master Jean Prouvé, a Laffanour specialty. The "rigor" of Shaker furniture makes it



Cupboard over 20 drawers, Harvard or Canterbury, circa 1840. Pine, cherry pulls, yellow paint; 78 by 60 by 16½ inches.

“a perfect companion to industrial design,” the French daily crowed. “François and I are not specialists, but we love Shaker design. I thought it was interesting to have a new look at it. At the same time, we needed the museum’s authority. This is the first time Shaker furniture has been shown at Maastricht. It was a discovery for most people. TEFAF attracts a lot of very tasteful, knowledgeable people from all over Europe. They got it immediately,” said Ségalot.

The dealer, who keeps a weekend house in upstate New York, became interested in Shaker furniture nearly a decade ago after visiting Hancock Shaker Village in Pittsfield, Mass. An aficionado of European Modernist

furniture, he is something of a minimalist, a trait he shares with fellow Shaker enthusiast and Columbia County resident Ellsworth Kelly. ([Continued on page 52 inside the E-edition](#))

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