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Timeless appeal

After thirty years of designing elegantly harmonious interiors, Charles Zana is returning to his love for furniture with the launch of his first collectible design collection

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French architect and interior designer Charles Zana is best known for his graceful take on interiors – from private homes to hospitality projects. For 30 years Zana has been developing spaces of new traditions, where classicism and a contemporary approach are married with emotion and artistic harmony. The designer is now on a new journey in his career with the launch of his first-ever collection of furniture and lighting which was unveiled during FIAC in the setting of a stunning 18th-century Parisian townhouse, Hôtel de Guise. The exhibition – *Ithaque* – is a prelude to the official launch of Charles Zana Mobilier in January 2022.

"My early passion for furniture is actually what led me towards pursuing a career in architecture," Zana begins. "That is why the exhibition is called *Ithaque*, because there's this idea and symbolism of a voyage, exploration of other realms and ideas, only to return home to what you know and love. After the Covid-19 crisis, I wanted to return to my first love, furniture; [to] apply my 30 years of experience as an architect and interior designer and demonstrate this collection as the product of an inspired, creative path that evokes my identity and values, [and] my manifesto for design. That is what I want Charles Zana Mobilier to be." ►►



*Champel sofa in solid oak (tinted/ varnished) and fabric
Edge 2 table, featuring green Ming top and legs in brushed cedar*

design





Matteo armchair in solid oak tinted and velvet
Yos table lamp featuring a wood base and paper lampshade

will find the pieces of this collection aim to find the intersection of luxury and necessity; the minimalistic purity within the base purpose of the piece but clothed in indulgent fabrics like velvet; the colours deep and rich but subdued in its overall palette."

Highlights from the collection include a classic armchair in solid oak, upholstered in nutmeg toned fabric, and stylish oak frame chairs with both suede and woven leather seats, each displaying Zana's skill at marrying diverse fine materials. The lighting designs include suspended, floor and wall lamps in varying shapes, ranging from floor lamps that mimic the structure of an organ to a lantern with a shade of curved coloured glass segments that pays homage to the workmanship of Venetian master glassblowers.

"With this new collection I seek to achieve the same balance between purity of forms, simplicity of volumes and functionality, as I embark on a new quest to create timeless design," Zana notes. ■

For his first collection, Zana draws on his deep admiration for designers of the 1930s: the natural materials of Jean-Michel Frank, the compositional tension of Pierre Chareau, and the sensuality of Gio Ponti. Working together with French artisans, *Ithaque* proposes a celebration of a new luxury, where forms are simpler, and materials take on raw properties while still dressed in an elegance of textures and proportions.

"Before the pandemic, we were living in more of a Baroque, decorative moment, but now we're going toward things that are simpler, more authentic and made of natural materials that play with proportions, which absolutely speaks more to my tastes. I love architecture and design that pay homage to local crafts, raw materials and classic proportions – but that are of a resolutely modern aesthetic," he says. "As a trained architect and art lover, I am guided by three fundamental principles: proportion, elegance and comfort. As such, you



Tunisian-born, French designer Charles Zana at the *Ithaque* exhibition