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Exhibition: Mobilier National at Demisch Danant

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The **Mobilier National** is the successor to the **Garde-Meuble de la Couronne** (the entity originally responsible for the safeguarding of royal furnishings and tapestries), which was reorganized by Colbert in 1663; its structure still serves as the basis for the current administration's organization. In addition to maintaining inventories and conserving and caring for furnishings, the Garde-Meuble de la Couronne also acted as an important force for preserving classic techniques through its traditional workshops. It was responsible for furnishing royal residences and issued the commissions necessary for these programs. This remains the central role for the Mobilier National, which is now responsible for the interior design and furnishing of presidential residences, as well as official buildings (ministries, embassies, major government agencies, the National Assembly, and the Senate).

In the early 1960s, the French government, under the leadership of André Malraux, then the Minister of Culture, inaugurated a policy of supporting creative endeavor; the objective was to provide genuine patronage that would foster the revival of French furniture design. As part of this commitment, the Atelier de Recherche et de Création (ARC) was established in 1964 under the direction of Jean Coural. The mission of this entity was to promote contemporary French styles, providing designers with modern technical resources and manufacturers with distribution opportunities, based on carefully directed research.

The ARC is a research laboratory with a highly qualified staff devoted to studying new materials and creating prototypes that are developed through collaboration with designers and in close cooperation with interested manufacturers. The design models remain the property of the government but may be subsequently distributed by a French producer.

The finest designers of the 1960s and 1970s worked with Mobilier National, and the most significant creations of the era were products of this venture. Since its inception, the ARC has produced over 500 pieces of furniture, including special commissions for french pavilions at

expositions of Montreal and Osaka, presidential residences and offices, and more recently the French embassy in Berlin and the Ministry of Culture and of Communication.

Exhibition: Mobilier National, New York, November 8 – February 11, at [Demisch Danant](#) ^[1]

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[1] Demisch Danant: http://www.demischdanant.com/exhibitions-and-events/2011-11-08_mobilier-national/

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