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Nadia Pasquer
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"Celestial Geometry"
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Daniel Buren, *Untitled* vases, at Friedman & Vallois Gallery, New York

Daniel Buren
Untitled
2010
Friedman & Vallois

Joe Hogan basket in "Material Poetry" at the American Irish Historical Society

Rachel McKnight ruff (on Daniel O'Connell's *The Liberator* bust) in "Material Poetry" at the American Irish Historical Society

Heather Smith MacIsaac's *Lars Bolander's Scandanavian Design* (Vendome Press, 2010)

Bronze hand with silver plate
18th century, Italian
De Vera

Alain Douillard, "Le Forgeron du Fer," at Magen H Gallery

Alain Douillard
Chairs
1990
"Le Forgeron du Fer"
Magen H Gallery

ARTNET DESIGN
by Brook S. Mason

Forget Chelsea. The Upper East Side, Midtown and the Village are now studded with design and contemporary deco-arts exhibitions, including three new dealers staking out this territory.

Start uptown, where this week, L'Arc en Seine (at 15 East 82nd Street) in partnership with Brussels dealer Pierre Marie Giraud, best known for displays of top flight contemporary ceramics at TEFAF Maastricht, debut a show of porcelains by Bruges-based Nadia Pasquer. A former drawings teacher, Pasquer takes ceramics to a new level of engagement. She hand forms polyhedrons but softens their edges, then dots them with tiny pin pricks mimicking constellations -- thus the exhibition title, "Celestial Geometry."

Pasquer's palette runs from white to a brown approaching bronze, which she achieves by hand-polishing the work with porcelain wedges. Her ceramics are engaging in their multifacetedness. You pick them up, reposition them, turn them and set up an entire new composition. Prices are ridiculously modest: $1,600-$4,000. Grab the work in different colors, rich tobacco, bronze.

Daniel Buren at Friedman & Valois
French conceptual post-painter Daniel Buren, widely known for disseminating colorful awning stripes that stand in for the art-making act, has in the past taken over the Guggenheim Museum with one of his installations, and has a work appearing in the Philippe Segalot-curated auction at Philips de Pury & Company on Nov. 8, 2010.

Now Friedman & Valois (at 27 East 67th Street), best known for exquisite Art Deco furniture, is featuring a show with the engaging title, "Hundred Vases: Daniel Buren."

Buren translates his esthetic of vertical stripes to white ceramic vessels with great style. Each of ten shapes has a different palette, in hues running from spiced-up cantaloupe to deep blue. The works are all unique, in an affirmation of the artist's refusal to consider multiples.

Most appealing in clusters, the vases are perfect for punching up minimal or just plain drab interiors. Plus, the price points are reasonable: $7,000-$17,000.

"Material Poetry"
On Fifth Avenue directly opposite the Metropolitan Museum, the American Irish Historical Society is featuring what is hands down the best design show in town. It's practically an insider secret. "Material Poetry," Oct. 8-Nov. 18, 2010, is devoted to top tier contemporary designers along with ceramics, metal and wood artisans from Ireland. It's the inaugural show of a three-year initiative on the part of the society and Causey Contemporary gallery in Brooklyn. Culture Ireland, the government agency charged with the promotion of Irish arts, also supports the exhibition.

The society headquarters, a restored Beaux Arts mansion with its period paneling and 19th-century marble portrait busts, provides the perfect setting. Not to miss are Mark Hanvey's wood vessels, which are paper thin; Joe Hogan's baskets, some making a nod to works by Louise Bourgeois; Rachel McKnight's plastic ruffs and necklaces, which channel 17th century Dutch fashion; and Joseph Walsh's 2009 *Erosion Table*, a piece made of olive ash that merits museum purchase.

Bolander, Devira
Opening last month were Lars Bolander, who introduced the Swedish country look, specifically its Gustavian painted furniture, to a New York audience. He's taken up roost in the Fine Arts Building (at 232 East 59th Street). With a new book, *Lars Bolander's Scandinavian Design* (Vendome Press) and a heavy-duty speaking tour, Bolander is bound to up the appeal of 19th-century Swedish antiques.

Also new on the uptown scene is De Vera, which has expanded from its home base at 1 Crosby Street to also take a slip of a gallery, a mere 600 square feet, at 26 East 81th Street. Federico de Vera, who designed the Neue Galerie Otto Dix exhibition, first blazed a trail in San Francisco with his chic cabinet-of-curiosities esthetic, which melded design, art, jewelry and naturalia.

Devotees of his intriguing sensibility include Ronald Lauder, Paul Smith and photographer Bruce Weber. Each of them contributed essays to his books.

Uptown, De Vera's emphasis is on jewelry, but includes a mélange of new Venetian glass that looks exactly like the best of the 18th century, intaglio bracelets and necklaces, Georgian shoe buckles and a vintage Sardinian coral tree that is captivating.

Alain Douillard at Magen H
Last but not least, down in the NYU neighborhood (at 54 East 11th Street), Magen H Gallery is presenting "Le Forgeron du Fer," the first U.S. retrospective of French sculptor Alain Douillard. He's the French equivalent of Harry Bertoia in that his oeuvre includes jewelry, fountains, furniture, lighting and sculpture.

The soft-spoken Douillard, who lives in Nantes, works in chrome, copper and wood. Some of the wood furniture is akin to that of Alexandre Noll. His steel and brass *Illuminated Mural Sculpture* from 1970 is a major work, and should cement his position in this country on the art and design axis.

BROOK S. MASON is U.S. correspondent for the *Art Newspaper*, and also writes for the *Financial Times* and other publications.

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