

ART+LIFE

Milan-based art gallery, PalermoUno has an interesting selection of works that transforms an eight-roomed house into a consultancy studio for refined design. Seen here is a 1950s Italian armchair, sculpture and a painting by Jean Paul Decroix



## A RIOT OF COLOUR

*Located in Brera, Milan's iconic neighbourhood, interior designer Sophie Wannenes invites us into her one-of-a-kind art gallery – a true Wunderkammer with an eclectic vibe*

RIGHT The Ressource Peintures coloured kitchen features vintage chairs by Pierluigi Colli upholstered with Kirkby Design Fabric, 1950s vintage Italian mirrors, Stuff Design wooden cutting boards, Kerameio ceramics and Glob iron trays  
 BELOW The living area includes an antique dog sculpture courtesy of Wannenes, a rug from Ilo Edizioni, lamps by Frama, vintage sofa and cushions from Kirkby Design



There is nothing simple about PalermoUno, the latest gallery to open its doors to art connoisseurs. A visit to this address is akin to stepping into a design wonderland.

Set against the grandeur of an iconic art district, the gallery is saturated in dramatic colours paired with unique art, vintage furniture and contemporary pieces. Sophie Wannenes, a decorator and vintage dealer, says, "Design for me is something aesthetically connected to a handy object of daily use." It was a chance discovery of a decrepit space that had the designer see beyond the dust and ruin. Sophie set about transforming the eight-room apartment with herringbone parquet into a space where one witnesses a continuous unfolding of changing scenarios and settings in the art and design world.

The yellow room captures Sophie's design philosophy of letting spaces evolve. It was designated to be a storeroom, but when she started experimenting with objets d'art, the room started taking shape and transformed into a yellow studio where most of the objects are circular. Sophie's work often blurs the lines between contemporary design and vintage



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RIGHT Ceramic sculptures by Alessandro Iudici on a Pietro Russo Design bookshelf complement the blue palette from Ressource Peintures; BELOW The Arco curtain from Kirkby Design, dedicated to Gio Ponti is paired with a Lotus lamp by Mason Editions designed by Serena Confalonieri. An Italian vintage chest of drawers and vases are paired with an Anita Pankoff painting



style. Walking us through the space, she says, "Unlike a regular art gallery, PalermoUno maintains its functional connotation, revealing a desire to create an ever-changing space where visitors can discover exhibited objects and purchase them."

The designed products don't carry the "do not touch" tag. The entire venue is designed to engage you — an organic and interactive space that allows you to experience it with almost all your senses. In a way, the selected works speak with one another in a game of reflections and memories; and invite you to be part of the conversation. The continued aesthetic search is a common thread connecting the wunderkammer where exhibited lamps, ceramics, collages and everyday objects create a sense of awe. Sophie adds, "Moving away from a traditional definition of an art gallery, I wanted to create a space where an experiment with elements would create an immersive experience." ♦ **Meenakshi Shankar**

Photographs courtesy PalermoUno