

Corporate press pack

# MOISSONNIER



**1885-2015**  
**130 years of creation**



# 1885-2015

## 130 ans de création

**I**n its specialist field of furniture-making, it maintains the unrivalled expertise and French manufacture whose high-quality craftsmanship is valued around the world.

Moreover it raises furniture-making to the level of an art of living, by creating furniture whose function is overshadowed by its mere presence. As with a work of art.

At the intersection of traditional styles and the aesthetic avant-garde, Moissonnier carves out its own style, characterised by emotion, inspiration, fantasy, idiosyncrasy, as well as exacting standards.

Standards applied down to the last detail, reflected in the choice of finishes exclusive to each of its creations, as well as a commitment to the preservation of its environment.

These values contribute to making Moissonnier a timeless design brand. A mark synonymous with bold, bespoke design, identifying a comprehensive collection of furniture, as well as a recognised trademark for all interior architects looking for a manufacturer capable of living up to the originality of their designs.

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# 1885

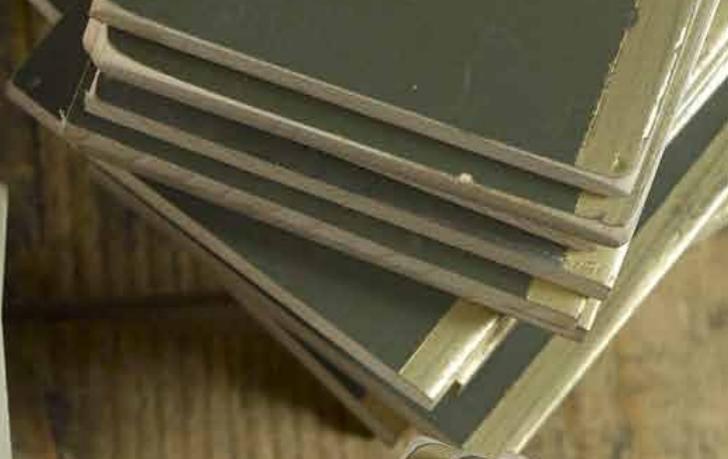
## The birth of a great firm

**I**n 1885, Émile Moissonnier founded his workshop in Bourg-en-Bresse at the heart of a forested region offering a rich supply of oak, ash burl and burr elm, as well as fruit woods such as pear, cherry and walnut.

He was a talented painter and sculptor, the epitome of a creative craftsman, designing each item of furniture as a unique piece. He was the first in a line of inventive furniture-makers that to this day continues to perpetuate the tradition of beautiful workmanship.

In 1923, he was succeeded by his two sons Gabriel and Paul, who expanded the workshop to the scale of a factory. A few machines were brought in to assist the craftsmen's hand, which remained the key element in a production perpetually defying the laws of standardisation. Production increased and pieces began to be exported. By now, Moissonnier was recognised around the world and given pride of place in stores as prestigious as Bloomingdale's in New York, where the brand has been distributed since the 1960s.





# 1976

## The emergence of a label and the invention of a style

**I**n 1976, the third generation, represented by Jean-Loup Moissonnier, took over the firm. A furniture-maker by birth, he first made his name in Paris as a fashion photographer and painter. Being a keen fan of bric-a-brac and vintage and passionate about the charm of old furniture, he steered Moissonnier towards reproduction of classic European pieces. He chose models he fell in love with at auctions and flea markets and skilfully reproduced their structure and patina.

This was a first step to inventing a genuine style, in collaboration with his wife, arising out of an osmosis between periods and cultures.

As a fashion designer while they still lived in Paris, Annie-Pierre Moissonnier transposed the conventions of fashion to the Moissonnier's furniture. Firstly colour and then patterns decorated the precise cuts of the wood, but in such a way that the furniture appeared to have been designed like that. Although they became increasingly creative and innovative, they never appeared new, as if plucked from a decorative fairy tale. The couple thereby created the "patina of the present" characteristic of the Moissonnier brand. A sum of excellence, combining know how and the instinctive creation of "gems" for the firm, which cultivates idiosyncrasy, paradox, style over content, and with a dash of impudence...



Since then, each new collection has been revealed in the style of a Haute Couture fashion show. A chest-of-drawers covered in jeans, Marie-Antoinette's taste given a pop makeover and 19th-century eclecticism swapping its kitsch for unexpected elegance...

Each piece of Moissonnier-signed furniture is unique in itself, receiving an exclusive finish, and may literally evolve infinitely to conform to the tastes of its commissioner. This was a sure sign of success and the company further modernised to draw in an even wider international audience.

1885  
M  
Fabriqué  
en France



# Today

## A mark of French luxury



**O**ver the years, Moissonnier has been able to preserve its know-how and enrich it to become an international leader in contemporary furniture. The brand was awarded the “Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant” (living heritage company) label in 2010, the year in which it anticipated the future, guaranteeing its long-term presence. It remained in the family fold, as Christine Duval and Jean-François Perche then took over the reins. Relations of Annie-Pierre Moissonnier, their first priority was to preserve the same know-how, exacting standards and style. Of course, tasks are naturally divided up, with Annie-Pierre and Jean-

Loup responsible for creation, leaving development to Christine and Jean-François.

At their initiative, a design office was set up. In parallel to the collections launched each year in January, they make the workshop’s skills available to specifiers, who find in Moissonnier an expert manufacturer, able to fulfil their projects in a very flexible and responsive way.

This new feather in Moissonnier’s cap gives the company a new dimension. The French luxury label becomes a firm, able to escape from its usual specialities to offer its talent to the greatest French and international interior designers.





## Hand and hearts

**F**rom the spirit of its founder, the firm manufactures furniture to the highest standards in its Bourg-en-Bresse workshops. Moissonnier now masters all aspects of arts and crafts related to woodworking (furniture-making, marquetry, sculpture, patinas, etc.) as well as associated areas of know-how such as bronze work, carving, gilding and silver-plating, tapestry, leatherwork and upholstery.

It is natural in its workshops for the older craftsmen to pass on their skills to apprentices.

Each year, trainee furniture-makers from prestigious schools such as the Ecole Boulle come to familiarise themselves with the methods and actions perpetuated in the factory's workshops. At the end of their training, the best of them join the family firm.

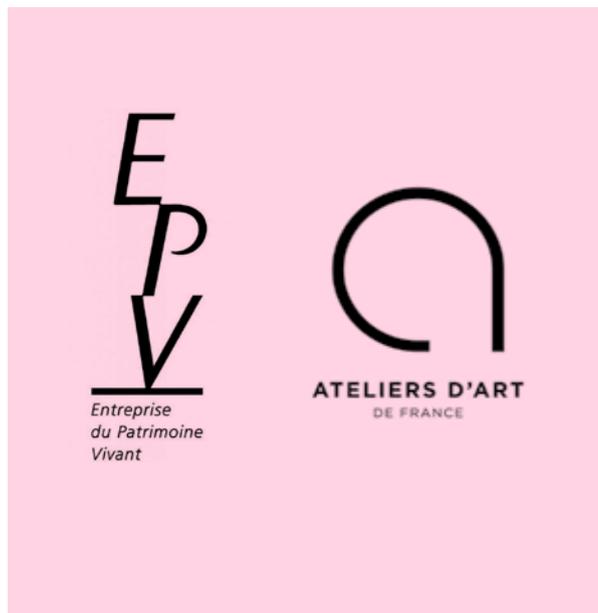
## The EPV and Atelier d'Art de France labels

**T**oday, preserving craft know-how has become a major concern for many family companies in France. That is why Moissonnier is a member of the Ateliers d'Art de France, a group representing the arts and crafts sector, promoting it in France and abroad and supporting member companies in their development.

Since 2010, Moissonnier has been labelled an “Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant” (living heritage company). The Bourg-en-

Bresse furniture-maker sees this as recognition for the work carried out on a daily basis by its craftsmen, using their increasingly rare know how.

This distinction, granted by the French Ministry of the Economy and Industry, recognises and supports firms with a history and heritage, sometimes centuries old, as well as the capacity for innovation and rare know how which have helped establish their reputation in the French entrepreneurial fabric.





## Wood – the soul of furniture

**A**t Moissonnier, it all begins with the choice and purchase of the wood. The material must be of the utmost quality and its selection is critical. This makes the purchaser's expertise of vital importance, since he builds up the stock required to respond to requests. He must anticipate the unforeseen, compensate for any shortfall and plan for the future. His role is pivotal to the manufacture, beauty and quality of the furniture.

Oak, cherry, walnut, pear, beech, sycamore, etc. – every variety is sourced from French forests, in Burgundy, Franche-Comté, etc. All this wood is stored as logs for at least six months. These are then passed through the dry kiln, to guarantee the optimum moisture content and prevent the wood from warping over time.



## Environmental focus

**I**n order to ensure the long-term future of its business, Moissonnier makes it a point of principle to respect the environment. The firm has therefore established very precise specifications for its procurement of wood. For instance, 90% of Moissonnier's supplies come from saw mills located near to the company, within a radius of less than 30km, in order to reduce its carbon footprint. The company which supplies 60% of all stock, specialising in beech, is located 5km from Bourg-en-Bresse and is PEFC and EC labelled, favours natural irrigation in isolated surroundings and recycles 100% of its waste. Moissonnier also favours the use of untreated wood, as does this supplier, based in the heart of the Saint-Marcel-

lin walnut forest, in the Dauphiné region of France, since 1822 and labelled an "Entreprise du Patrimoine Vivant", only working with untreated walnut and regional varieties.

Unlike 98% of the market, the logs and batches purchased are not chemically-treated in a tank, they have a traceable source and they come from sustainably-managed French forests.

Moissonnier is just as committed to preserving the environment in its daily practices. *Although the wood dries naturally in a special storage area, all varieties need to pass through the dry kiln to obtain a moisture level guaranteeing the stability of the material.* The kiln's

energy comes from sawdust, chippings and off-cuts recovered from the workshops for recycling and no chemicals are added.

Similarly, the whole factory is fitted with particle filters, which recover diluted residues, and selective sorting containers will soon be installed to recycle solid residues. This active approach continues in the patina workshop, which uses only water-based acrylic paints, making the use of solvents unnecessary. Leftover paint, diluting agents and varnish are also collected and treated by a specialist company. All these actions are part of a genuine sustainable development approach aimed at ensure the preservation of natural resources.

## A skills chain focused on excellence

**T**hen begins a long manufacturing process based on the highest standards of French furniture-making.

First, it is necessary to select the wood according to its intended use and to identify the parts which will be cut and used in production. Sometimes, only 25% of the material is used.

**In the cutting workshop**, the wood is cut widthways with a chainsaw and lengthways on the edger. **The next stage is planing** – smoothing all four sides – while the panels are assembled traditionally using tongue and groove.

**The firm has its own marquetry and veneer workshop**: local wood varieties are overlaid with a thin layer of oak or cherry, while burl walnut or ash burl

are inlaid for decoration. To achieve the height of refinement, a thin line, made up of an alternating contrast of black ebony and light boxwood, sets off the outline of a desk. Now as in the past, the pieces are assembled using mortise-and-tenon joints. Two sculptors work full-time to hand-finish the moulding and sculptures begun by the machine, putting the finishing touches by chisel to a shell or an acanthus leaf.

**For the assembled furniture, the finishing work** can then begin. At Moissonnier, this is a real labour of love, involving around 20 experts, led by Jean-Loup Moissonnier. The exclusive mixtures and procedures he has developed must remain the firm's secret.

The finishing workshops apply the gold leaf which embellishes certain models. Often produced on-demand by Moissonnier, which commissions the moulds from a foundry, bronzes receive an oxidising treatment to give them age. As required by the tenets of Dandyism, it is impossible to imagine a piece of Moissonnier furniture looking new!

As with all great furniture-makers, before leaving the workshops for the four corners of the world, each piece receives **the firm's mark**. Marked into wood in counter-relief, the majestic M of Moissonnier, topped by a crown, sits above the company's creation date, 1885, establishing each piece in the arts and crafts tradition.





## Catalogue

**E**ach year in January, Moissonnier presents a new thematic collection at the *Scènes d'intérieur* show, during Maison&Objet. These collections enhance the diversity of its catalogue, which currently contains 160 references. This paean to furniture contains examples of every possible type: from dressers to desks and book shelves, chests of drawers to tables and consoles, not to mention beds, bedside tables, mirrors and accessories, as well as a wide range of seats.

Playing on the natural beauty of the wood, the colours of an infinite range of lacquers, increasingly surprising material effects, as well as painted patterns, Annie-Pierre Moissonnier develops each new line as a melting pot of inspirations.

The finishes work like clothing and the bronze embellishments like accessories on the bodies of the furniture produced from this vast corpus of European furniture.

Modernity also makes its mark on ancestral tradition and, in a tribute to Vivienne Westwood, fantastical journeys and the joy of living, designs from the 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and more recently 20<sup>th</sup> century draw inspiration from the present. In this way, each new product joins the vast repository of the Moissonnier catalogue - each one an example of the brand's exclusive know how.





## Special orders

Over the last few years, Moissonnier has undertaken an increasing number of collaborations with leading specifiers, to whom it offers a bespoke design service. The Moissonnier design office has become a natural partner to the luxury hotel trade, as well as the most prestigious private refurbishment projects. The fulfils the boldest plans, drawing on the full extent of its know how and its exclusive palette of finishes. The quality and consistency of its 100% French manufacture and the high level of responsiveness of its workshops are

major factors in its success. Special orders are therefore now accounting for an increasingly large share of the Bourg-en-Bresse factory's production, now representing 40% of the brand's turnover. In addition, the design office also works on comprehensive interior design projects. A natural extension of the firm's field of expertise, ensuring that Moissonnier is now the most famous name in French furniture design.







## Distribution

### Moissonnier's addresses

Moissonnier has a showroom in Paris, in the 7<sup>th</sup> arrondissement, at 52, Rue de l'Université. This is an ideal location, between the antique shops along the edge of the Seine and the designer names of the Boulevard Saint-Germain, for a brand whose creations result from a catalogue of historic forms, an amalgamation of contemporary inspirations.

The 200m<sup>2</sup> space divided over two levels presents a selection of pieces in various styles, with the latest creations sitting effortlessly alongside the brand's emblematic models.

The brand has three showrooms internationally, in Pekin (China), in Seoul (South Korea), in Moscow (Russia). Shanghai and Chengdu coming soon in China.

### A selective network

in France and abroad.

Outside these exclusive points of sale, Moissonnier benefits from a widespread distribution network of specialist furniture and design stores. A selective network emphasising pieces with a strong personality.

Nearly 90% of the firm's turnover is generated outside France.



**Moissonnier's world on the web**  
**[www.moissonnier.com](http://www.moissonnier.com)**



## Few figures

**32**

furniture-makers in the workshops

**200**

references in the catalogue

**L.XV**



The best-seller L.XV chest-of-drawers richly decorated in bronzes (REF.573)

**90%**

of turnover generated outside France

**1700**

number of manufactured furniture

### Manufacture

average storage time for wood  
**minimum of 1 year**

number of stages in manufacturing a piece of furniture: **7**

number of stages in finishing a piece of furniture (the Moissonnier patina): **11**

number of parts for producing a chest-of-drawers:  
**40 pieces of wood which then need assembling**

**1500** pieces of furniture are manufactured in the workshops each year

### Data sheet

Creation of the company  
**1885**

Chairman  
**Jean-François Perche**

Managing director  
**Christine Duval**

Artistic director  
**Annie-Pierre Moissonnier**

Business  
**design and production of high-quality furniture**

Workshop (6000m<sup>2</sup> of covered space)  
**67, avenue Maginot  
01000 Bourg-en-Bresse FRANCE**

Showrooms  
**Paris : 52, rue de l'Université (7<sup>th</sup> arr.)  
Pekin, Moscou, Seoul,  
Shanghai & Chengdu (coming soon)**

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# Brief Moissonnier glossary

## **Band saw**

The band saw is a machine-tool mainly used for making curved cuts thanks to its very narrow blades.

## **Carving using a gouge**

The gouge is one of the many tools required to sculpt wood. It is mainly carried out by hand.

## **Chisel**

used to strike and distort edges and assembly joints, contributing to the first stage in ageing the raw wood.

## **Dovetail**

A dovetail is a two-part joint. It comprises a trapezium-shaped tenon on one of the parts, and a groove in the same shape on the other part. It takes its name from the shape of a dove's tail. It is mainly used for putting together drawers.

## **Dry kiln**

A dry kiln is a large piece of equipment into which wood to be used in furniture-making is placed. The purpose of the device is to reduce the wood's moisture content to the desired level.

## **French polishing**

French polishing is a varnishing process using Shellac (the bonding agent) and alcohol (the solvent). Its name refers to its origins as a technique developed in 18<sup>th</sup> century France.

## **Logs**

Logs are produced by felling trees. They comprise the trunk or a portion of the trunk, with branches removed but its bark left on. It is sliced to make boards or veneer.

## **Mortise-and-tenon assembly**

Mortise-and-tenon is a two-part joint. The mortise is called female. It is the hollow part of the joint. The tenon is the protruding, male part. The two parts fit into one another to form a joint. Mortise-and-tenon joints have existed in furniture-making for thousands of years.

## **Planer**

A planer is a machine-tool used to work a piece of wood, which has first been smoothed using a surfacer, to bring it to the desired thickness and width by removing successive layers of material.

Each pass must be regulated to remove a maximum of 3 millimetres. The width should be planed first and then the thickness.

## **Planing**

planing is the action of smoothing and flattening.

## **Surfacer**

The surfacer is a machine-tool used for smoothing or flattening two given sides which are square and perpendicular to one another, then used to trim the wood to the desired thickness and width. The next stage is planing.

## **Tongue and groove**

This is the traditional assembly comprising a groove (female part) and a tongue (male part), designed to assemble two pieces of wood lengthways.





M

MOISSONNIER

