

Opening

This Elegant Atelier in London Is as Beautiful as It Gets

The Roman designer Achille Salvagni sets up a new shop

By Laura Itzkowitz

November 25, 2020



Inside the showroom. Photo: Simon Upton

Roman designer [Achille Salvagni](#) didn't originally set out to design furniture, but when a client asked him to create some bespoke pieces for his home, he rose to the challenge. Then, a New York-based gallerist saw the pieces, contacted Salvagni, and told him he was so talented it would be crazy for him not to have his own limited-edition collection. That's how he started working with [Maison Gerard](#), which represents him in New York.



A corner window with a street view makes for the perfect perch for one credenza. Photo: Simon Upton

levels, it's three times as large as his old space.

The elegant atelier features walls that have been hand-finished in plaster, with the corners rounded off, and windows with polished bronze frames that contrast with the white interiors. Herringbone parquet floors give the space a sophisticated, almost residential feel. According to Salvagni, in

“I think Rome is the best place in the world to get inspired and create, London is the best place in Europe to show, and New York is the best place to sell,” Salvagni tells AD PRO, explaining that his pieces go from Rome to London to New York and back again. “It’s a sort of circular system that I created and it works very well.”

Before the COVID-19 pandemic hit, he was splitting his time equally among the three cities. Now, he’s spending more time in Rome and in London, where he’s just opened his new showroom at 1A Grafton Street in Mayfair. It’s located just a few doors down from his former atelier. However, with around 2,000 square feet spread over two



A vase by Salvagni. Photo: Courtesy of Achille Salvagni

addition to exhibiting his own collections, the atelier will display “extremely important trophy pieces that I will find in the market or in the auctions,” the aim of which is “to demonstrate that my pieces can easily create a dialogue with someone else’s work.”



Displayed atop a pale pink cabinet are more vases. Photo: Simon Upton

Salvagni, who melds inspiration from his Roman heritage with the Scandinavian aesthetic he came to admire while studying in Stockholm, describes his work as “an attempt to freeze beauty.” He collaborates with a number of craftspeople in and around Rome, including a bronze caster who works with the Vatican, stoneworkers who take care of the marble and mosaics in the city’s many churches, and woodworkers who restore cabinetry for noble palaces.

“I’m surrounded by such great talented craftsmen that it would be almost impossible to fail in terms of quality,” he said, adding that he calls the work they do “slow design,”

echoing the slow-food movement. “It’s a certain way to think of tradition in a new way and avoid that this great talent disappears because most of them are purely dedicated to taking care of something that belongs to the past.”

Rather than setting out with an idea for a piece he wants to create and searching for someone who can make it, he lets the craftspeople inspire him. He just finished a collaboration with Murano glassmakers and is working on a new range of cabinets that will be cast in bronze. Though his pieces have a sculptural quality and incorporate noble materials, he insists that he is first and foremost a designer. “I don’t want to create monuments just for the sake of my creativity,” he said. “I want to create beautiful objects that need to be used.”



A final look inside the space. Photo: Simon Upton