

Haute Secrets: Curator Extraordinaire Benoist Drut

BY [CATHERINE SABINO](#) | [NEWS](#) | FEBRUARY 8, 2017



Art specialist Benoist Drut of Maison Gerard. Photo: Robert Levin

Gallerist, art specialist, and curator extraordinaire **Benoist Drut** joined the influential [Maison Gerard](#) as a partner in the late 1990s. An innovator from the start, Drut began broadening the gallery's scope to include both mid-century and contemporary design, and was instrumental in the development of a wide range of recognized and emerging artists, including Hervé van der Straeten, Jean Girel, Marc Bankowsky, Matthew Solomon, and Miguel Cisterna. Throughout Maison Gerard's evolution, the gallery strengthened its focus on, and passion for, French Art Deco furniture and lighting. Here Drut, who splits his time between the East Village and a much photographed house in Sullivan County, shares his New York secrets.

Where were you born?

Vernon, France, across from the gardens of Claude Monet and Giverny

How long have you been in New York?

Over half my life...23 years!

Favorite New York neighborhood:

The East Village, my neighborhood for 23 years. It's a charming and authentic community with an intimate feel within the big city.



The Maison Gerard Gallery

Favorite Restaurant:

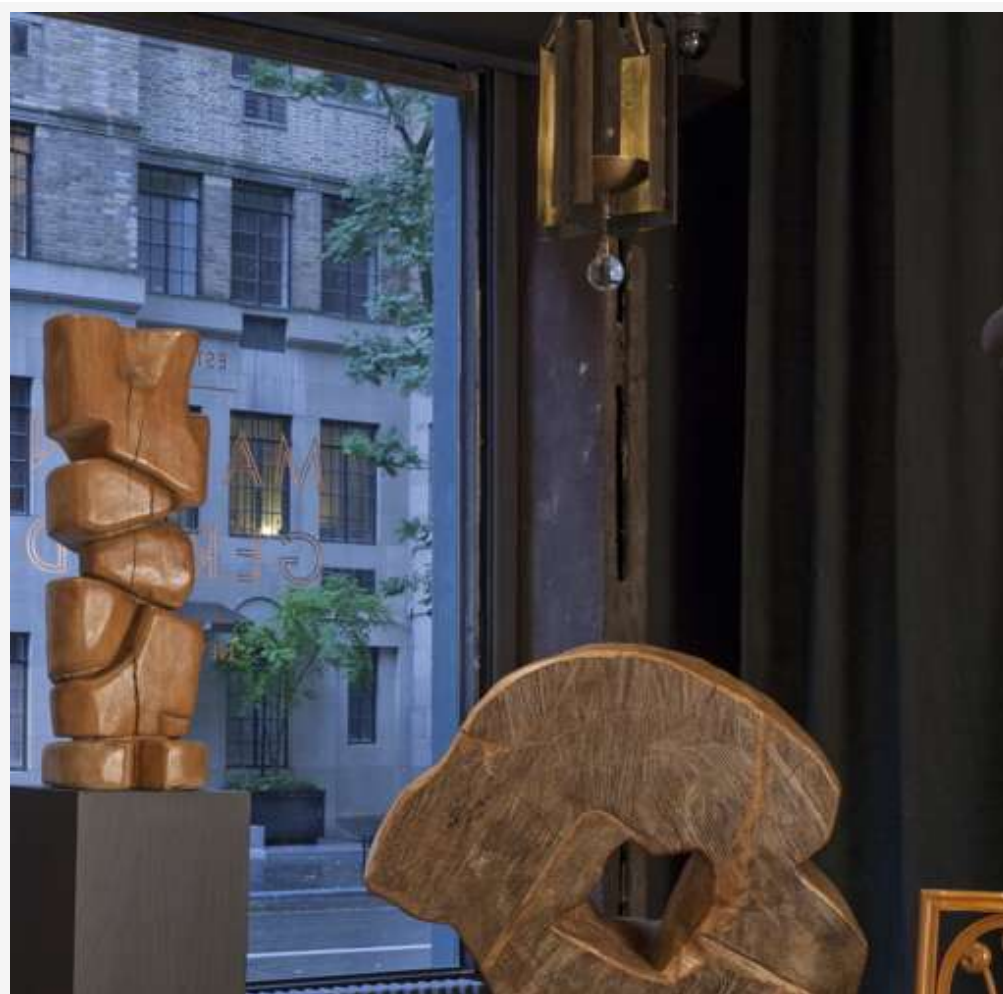
Mr. Chow on East 57th Street because it's a time capsule of New York and is a temple of fine Art Deco pieces. The restaurant has had the same menu forever, and has the absolute best staff.

Best for Italian:

Il Cantinori on 10th Street just a few steps away from my gallery and A Voce on Madison and 26th Street

Favorite New York dessert:

Cheesecake



Maison Gerard

Favorite spot for cocktails:

I'm French—we always have Champagne an arm's reach away in the gallery

Best for Sunday brunch:

I'm never in town on Sunday, but I love a sunny-side-up egg on toast.

Best place for a power business lunch:

The Gotham Bar & Grill—an institution with refined cuisine and service.

If you have out-of-town guests, which hotel would you recommend?

My two go-tos for guests are either the Greenwich Hotel or the Marlow Hotel.

Favorite gallery:

Jack Shainman Gallery

Favorite showrooms for design items:

I'm inspired by so much that I could never pick just one.

Favorite retail stores for design items:

My taste has changed so much that I have no favorites – I like to see it all.

Favorite stores for clothing shopping:

JCrew Men's Shop at the Liquor Store on White Street, because it's small enough but filled with all the essentials I need!

Best gym/athletic facility:

Don't belong to that species...!

Favorite charity:

The Bard Graduate Center

Night-on-the-town favorites:

An evening at Lincoln Center

Best museum:

The Metropolitan Museum of Art

What book are you reading now?

I'm about to start *The North China Love* by Marguerite Duras again. She's one of my favorite writers.

Describe New York in three words:

Fast, fascinating, and exhausting!

Favorite historic/legendary New York place to see or explore:

The Morgan Library

What is the secret to your success?

Success? Which success! How do you judge success? By the gray hair and wrinkles? ;)