

DESIGN & DECORATING

THAT'S DEBATABLE

Will a Circular Settee Make Your Home Look Like a Hotel Lobby?

NO The appeal of a round, or borne, settee begins with its novelty. "It immediately becomes a conversation piece," said Newport Beach, Calif., designer Barclay Butera, whose Louboutin-red tufted version is a guaranteed seducer. "It's a Victorian piece that people are used to seeing in an entry or gallery," said New York designer Vicente Wolf, who positioned a custom blue-leather borne in the center of a casual family room. "I liked bringing an idea from the past and using it in an unconventional way." Family members who'd rather not lounge on a mega-pooof can sit in wicker chairs and simple white contemporary armchairs ranged around the settee. "It has a romance and history and a bit of humor to it," he added. The perch can also mitigate structural deficiencies: "It acts as a short 'column' to add architecture to a room, without the constraints of a completely vertical division," said Los Angeles architect Raun Thorp. Stacey Bewkes, founder of lifestyle website Quintessence, whose flower-printed settee anchors several lounge vignettes in her living room, likes the social possibilities: "It is amazing how comfortably it can accommodate additional people for a very convivial and interconnected space."

YES For some designers, a round settee has no place in a home. "People are sitting facing outward and not with each other, so it does not work in a living room setting," said New York designer Jarvis Wong. "It's fine in a hotel lobby or restaurant precisely because you don't want to talk to a stranger sitting next to you." New York's Tamara Eaton concurred: "It doesn't create a social circle, which is usually the first requirement for a room with seating," she said. And Los Angeles interior designer Schuyler Samperton said, "One of these would be perfect in a movie from the 1950s starring Doris Day as twins in a madcap case of mistaken identity, but not in a house." The same quality that makes them ideal for transient rooms in hotels leads some designers to draft bornes for rooms where no one nests for long. New York designer Sasha Bikoff endorsed their use in smaller spaces such as an entry or dressing room. Brunch guests can pull off rain boots and women wriggle into hose with relative privacy. But if you're short on square footage in a furniture-heavy public area such as a living room, stay away from the circle perch, advised Mr. Butera: "If the space is not grand enough, it will stifle the room." —*Mimi Faucett*



INN VOGUE A patterned borne settee in a Chicago apartment designed by Julia Buckingham, as seen in her book 'Modernique: Inspiring Interiors Mixing Vintage and Modern Style' (Abrams)

ROUND IT OUT // THREE OPTIONS SHOULD YOU CHOOSE TO TAKE A WHIRL



Dragonfly Bench, from \$7,100, Flexform New York, 212-355-2328



Feraud, from \$8,797, christopherguy.com



Powell & Bonnell Rondo Pouf, from \$13,688, Dennis Miller Associates Showroom, 212-684-0070

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FRESH PICK

THE CROSSOVER DESIGNER

An auction of Alberto Pinto's personal furnishings collection, plus a book of his interiors, honor his genre-traversing talent



HE BOUGHT EVERY day," explained Linda Pinto of her late brother, interior designer Alberto Pinto. "A piece of furniture, an objet d'art—whatever he needed for himself and for the client." On Sept. 12-14, Christie's France will auction more than 1,000 pieces that the Morocco-born designer, whose clientele included Middle Eastern royalty and American industrialists, had made part of his personal collection before his 2012 death at 69. From nearly 6-foot Baroque-style obelisks to a colorful abstract by contemporary American painter Bill Scott, the lots highlight Mr. Pinto's protean taste. He was "in love with many styles," said his sister, who now heads the Paris design firm he founded. A recently published collection of work Mr. Pinto began and his namesake firm completed, "Alberto Pinto: Signature Interiors," confirms his range: on one spread (above) colorful geometrics frame primitive sculptures; on another, crystal and chinoiserie bedeck a neoclassical London mansion. Still, an idiosyncratic Alberto-ness unites both his interiors and the pieces being auctioned. Said Ms. Pinto, "He bought with the same eyes." —*Dorie Chevlen*

A Paris apartment as seen in 'Alberto Pinto: Signature Interiors' (Flammarion) illustrates the designer's comfort with contemporary style.



18th-century Anglo-Indian engraved-ivory and sandalwood cabinet, est. \$58,000-\$91,000 for near pair



Pair of monumental 19th-century obelisks of ormolu-mounted ebony, marbles and stone, est. \$35,000-\$57,000



'A Narrow Impasse' (2004), oil painting by Bill Scott, est. \$3,542-\$4,723