

GALERIE HALF

Clifford Fong, Los Angeles

It seems you can go home again. While househunting in Los Angeles in 2006, Clifford Fong, co-owner of Galerie Half, found himself less than inspired with what he was seeing. When he learned that the Koreatown apartment building he had inhabited while in college had gone condo, he moved quickly, procuring a three-bedroom "classic six" on the top floor of the French Normandy-style complex.

"In college I lived in the unit below," he says. "I had a mattress on the floor, and the living room had just a TV and one chair. Girlfriends used to come over and roller skate around the apartment. Basically, it was party central." Moving back, he says, "my interest was in really furnishing it and making it a home. I wanted to make it as well-appointed and comfortable as possible."

Such thinking is directly in line with the ethos at Galerie Half, which opened in 2009. There, Fong and his business partners Cameron Smith and Mark Goldstein bring together items with homespun appeal—a pair of well-worn 1962 leather sofas by Ilum Wikkelse, primitive African sculpture, a seventeenth-century Belgian table, roughly hewn wooden American pioneer furniture—to create surprising tableaux in which disparate objects coexist in a modern way that "transcends their origins." The merchandise is rounded out by iconic pieces such as early Arne Jacobsen Egg chairs and sconces by Jean Royère.

For his home, Fong—who has a background in fashion and maintains a clothing line while operating the gallery and designing interiors—felt it was important to "design within the space." Thus, the apartment feels more urban than the gallery, with slicker finishes that showcase significant pieces of modern design and art. Among Fong's treasures are his Hans Wegner dining chairs—his first major furniture purchase—and a Standard chair by Jean Prouvé. Drawings by Paul Klee, Jean Cocteau, and Andy Warhol share space with works by a friend, the Mexican artist Martín Soto Climent.

At both his home and the gallery, what's appealing to Fong is contradiction. "I like the idea that you can bring things together from different worlds," he says. "When you do, you create a bit of irony, something that's unexpected or unusual."

Seating in the living room includes Pierre Paulin's Oyster chair, a Jean Prouvé Ciro daybed, Bruno Mattoni's Famille 3 lounge chair, stools by Charlotte Perrelé, and Marco Zanuso's armless sofa.



The artwork over the mantle is by Paul Klee.
The dining room has a Florence Knoll table and a
brass chandelier of unknown origin. Fong purchased
the Hans Wegner dining chairs, his first pieces of
collectible design, in Paris. The pastel is by John Jallo.





Artworks including photographs by Mark Segal and Shahid Dastawala hang over a 1950s sofa by Bergo Mogensen in the den. The coffee table was a flea-market find.