

Jazzing up some 21st-century classics

In 1990, New Yorker Susan Zelouf was singing jazz in the Café de Paris in Rome. Captivated in the crowd, Belfast-born Michael Bell requested “a happy ballad”. She obliged with *Embraceable You*, and Cupid’s arrow zoomed home.

As it happens, the couple have a combined background in arts and engineering. Two decades on, Zelouf + Bell are Ireland’s leading design partnership, their award-winning, handcrafted furnishings gracing homes in Paris, New York and Tokyo, Irish embassies around the globe and the National Mu-



Zelouf + Bell Koi Noir low table is made of bog oak

seum of Ireland’s permanent collection. In May, New York Gallery Maison Gerard will

take their work to the European Fine Art Fair.

“Practical, elegant piec-

es that are built to endure,” is how Zelouf sums them up. Jennifer Goff of the National Museum calls them “21st-century classics – the haute couture of Irish furniture design, created for a discerning clientele”.

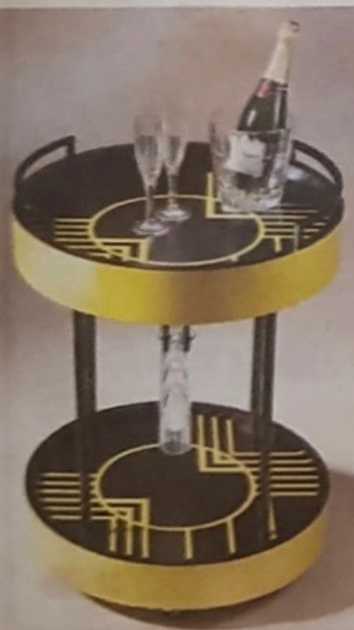
A recent project was the re-design of Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud (Ireland’s only two-star Michelin). A little bird tells me a leap in Champagne sales is down to their seductive Spyglass Champagne cart.

Pieces range from tables, sideboards and cocktail cabinets to Asian-inspired screens inlaid with marquetry, commissions taking ten to 16

weeks. Seen here is their Koi Noir low table, due to go under the hammer in London this month. The work is part of a series inspired by Irish architect and designer Eileen Gray, and specifically references her *Poissons* rug and corresponding lacquer table with a koi fish design, which was illustrated in *British Vogue* in 1917. Made of bog oak, its superb finish is the result of 20 coats of hand-applied lacquer.

Bid for it at Bonham’s Important Design sale, April 25, New Bond Street, London, estimate £5,000-£7,000; see bonhams.com.

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Zelouf + Bell designed this Champagne cart for Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud