

PROVENANCE

FRANK AUERBACH
LE CORBUSIER
PIERRE JEANNERET
LUCIE RIE

rajan bijlani

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INTRODUCTION

Rajan Bijlani presents *Provenance*, a collaborative exhibition at the Almhof Schneider, Lech. Taking its name from Amie Siegel's seminal film of the same title (2013), which focuses on the migration of mid-century modernist design by Pierre Jeanneret and Le Corbusier for the buildings of Chandigarh, *Provenance* places works by Frank Auerbach, Lucie Rie, Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret in dialogue and reflects on the movement of modernist works across continents and cultures.

At the heart of *Provenance* is Bijlani's long-standing engagement with the modernist legacy of Chandigarh, India's first planned city, conceived in 1951 by Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret. Situated at the foothills of the Himalayas, Chandigarh embodied the optimism of a newly independent nation, balancing monumental modernist ideals with its dramatic natural setting. Jeanneret's furniture designs, represented here by rare early-production examples from Bijlani's collection, were conceived with a deep sensitivity to climate, landscape, and local customs, utilising solid teak and Indian rosewood and crafted by hand in small workshops, whilst maintaining the structural rigour and style of the Swiss-French modernist aesthetic. Collected directly from Chandigarh and nearby homes and institutions in 2004, the provenance of these works was verified, in situ, with Michael Jefferson, a specialist in 20th-century art and design. Bijlani's integration of these pieces into his curatorial projects reflects both his commitment to the preservation of design heritage and his personal connection to India. They are works that foreground provenance as lived experience: objects shaped by place, use, and time.

This concern with origin and formative moments extends to the exhibition's works on paper and ceramics. An early charcoal drawing of a *Seated Figure* by Frank Auerbach, executed in 1951 while attending evening classes under David Bomberg, captures the emergence of a visual language that would later define one of the most significant artists of the post-war generation. Auerbach emigrated to Britain from Germany in 1939 as a refugee, without his parents, at just seven years old; he would go on to become one of the most significant artists of the post-war generation. Belonging to the *London School*, he is often stylistically grouped with the likes of his contemporaries, Leon Kossoff, Lucian Freud and Francis Bacon - to name but a notable few - whose expressive approach to figuration formed a psychological portrait of climate of post-war London. Marked by rapid, expressive lines, the charcoal's physicality speaks to Auerbach's early development and the historical circumstances that shaped his practice.

Lucie Rie trained in ceramics in Vienna at the Wiener Kunstgewerbeschule, having fled her home, she settled in London in 1938. Rie's contribution to post-war London extended beyond ceramic form and surface into the cultural fabric of the city itself. She entered a

milieu of émigré architects, writers and artists with similarly urbane, middle-European backgrounds. As Edmund de Waal notes, her work was in tune with the new optimism and formal clarity of the architecture and design of the period, the 'perfect kind of pot to sit in a modernist apartment ... with a good abstract painting behind them.'¹ Unlike the rural functionalism maintained by her contemporaries, Rie's idiom bore no counterpoint to the earthy traditions of British pottery and pots were the product of her environment: 'clay was brought and delivered in bags, glaze ingredients were ordered from chemists, and her pieces were fired in an electric kiln.'² The balance between pragmatism and modernist invention places Rie's practice in dialogue not only with London's post-war optimism but also with the cultural legacy of fin-de-siècle Vienna, a culture marked by what Kirk Varnedoe described as the 'conquest of applied art by architecture.'³ It was this spirit of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which framed design as part of a total work of art, that Rie transferred into her studio in London.

Equally attentive to beginnings is a teacup and saucer by Lucie Rie, produced during her Vienna years prior to her migration to London. This early object bears the clarity and refinement of Viennese modernism and the ethos of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, situating Rie's later British work within a broader European lineage. Its provenance underscores themes of displacement and continuity that run throughout the exhibition. Despite being an urban potter, throughout her life, Rie enjoyed spending time away from the city. She had a keen passion for skiing, hiking and rock climbing and particularly favoured activities that brought her into close contact with nature's elements. It is of little surprise that these influences found their way into her ceramics. Volcanic glazes recall the surfaces of rocks and subtle undulations of colour reveal themselves like the inside of a seashell. Not only defined by both Vienna and London, her works, as such, draw on a deep affinity with the natural world. They thus find a most appropriate home at the Almhof Schneider, Lech.

When Rajan first encountered the Almhof Schneider, its architectural coherence and focus on design immediately resonated with him. Gerold and Katia's pursuit of form, function, and beauty recalls both Le Corbusier and Pierre Jeanneret's holistic vision of Chandigarh and the modernist ideal of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. In this mountain setting, *Provenance* unfolds as a dialogue between objects and landscapes, linking the Himalayas to the Alps, Vienna to London, and the origins of modernism to its enduring afterlives.

1 Edmund De Waal, "Modern Things", in *Lucie Rie: the Adventure of Pottery*, Cambridge: Kettle's Yard, 2023, p. 149.

2 Eliza Spindel "Lucie Rie and the Natural World", in: *Ibid.* p. 199.

3 Kirk Varnedoe, *Vienna 1900*, exh. cat., New York: MoMA, 1986, p. 82.



FRANK
AUERBACH

1931 - 2024



FRANK AUERBACH
Seated Figure, 1951
Charcoal on paper
55.5 × 40 cm



A photograph of a snowy mountain landscape. In the foreground, a dark, modern-style armchair with wooden legs sits on a snow-covered slope. In the middle ground, a village with snow-covered roofs and a prominent church tower is visible. The background features steep, snow-covered mountains with dense evergreen forests. The sky is overcast, and the overall atmosphere is serene and quiet.

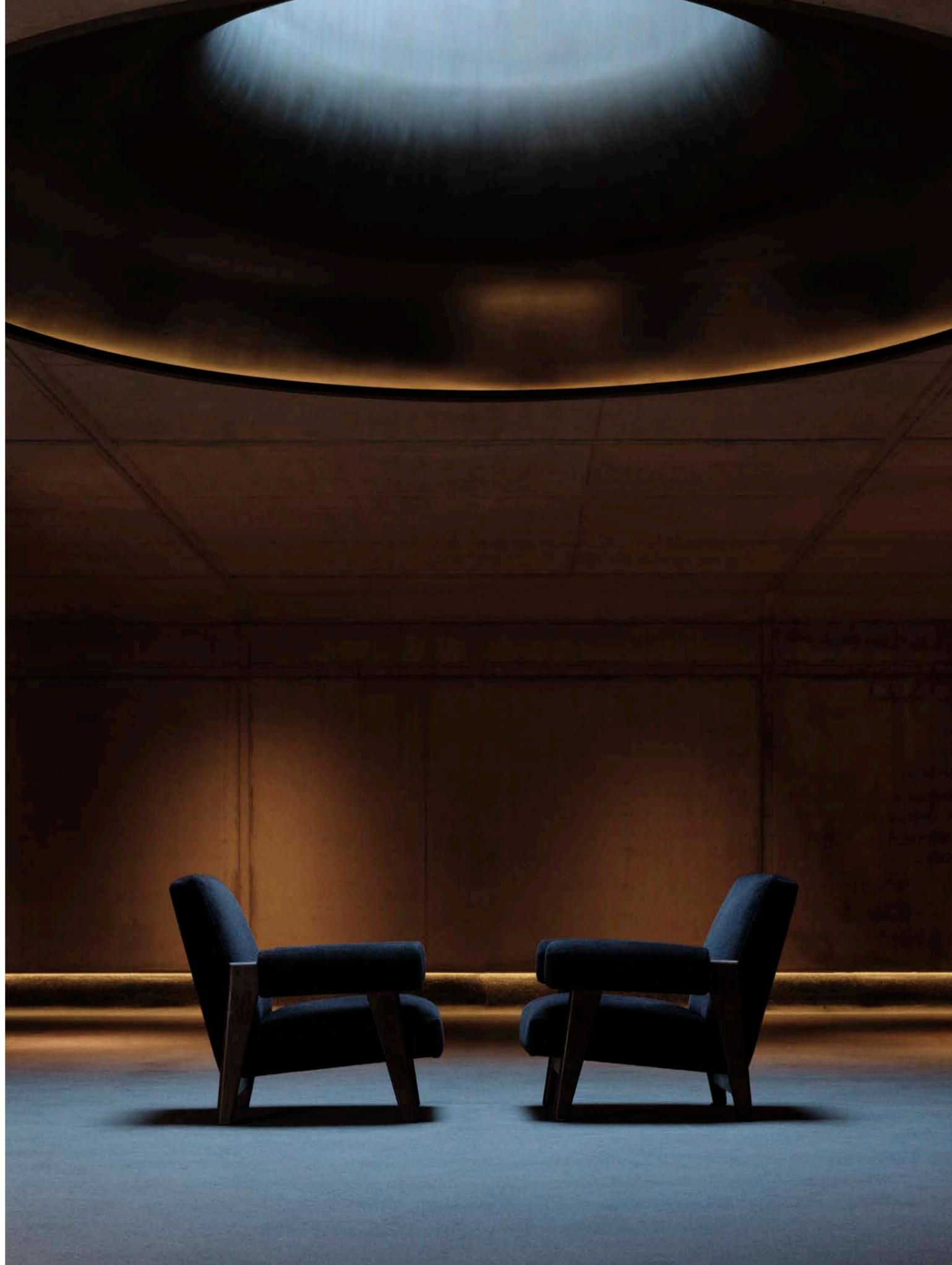
PIERRE JEANNERET
1896 - 1967
LE CORBUSIER
1887 - 1965



LE CORBUSIER & PIERRE JEANNERET
High Court Armchair, 1955
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Incas Alpaca and Wool — Café Noir
89 × 72 × 69cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02





PIERRE JEANNERET
Advocate Chair, 1955-6
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Sherpas Cashmere — Ginger
89 × 72 × 69cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01



PIERRE JEANNERET
Cross Frame Armchair, 1960
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Sherpas Cashmere — Muschio
83 × 69 × 78cm

Chief Architect's Office, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02





PIERRE JEANNERET
Committee Chair, 1955-6
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Incas Alpaca and Wool — Café Noir
88 × 60 × 66cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

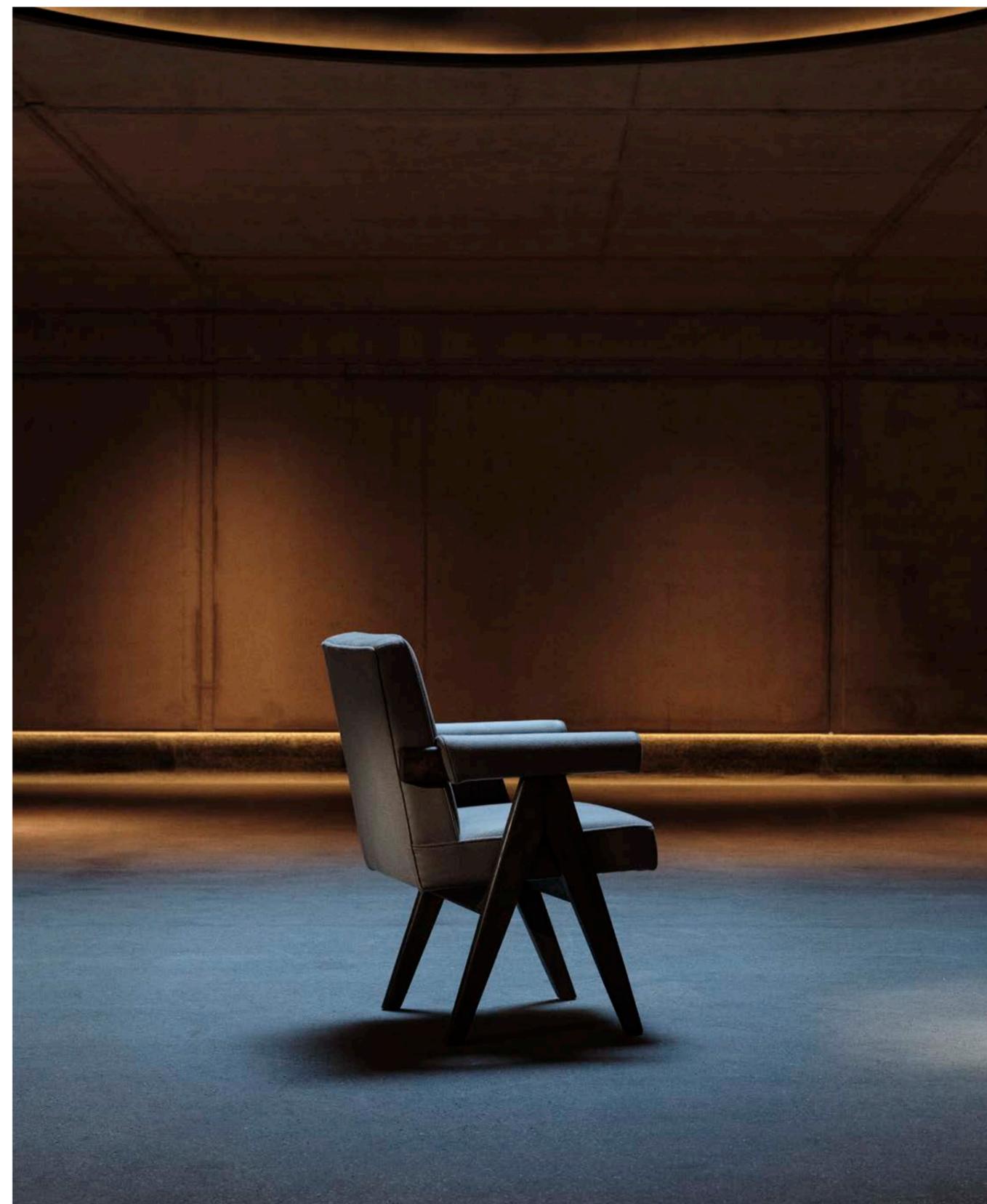
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PIERRE JEANNERET
Committee Chair, 1955-6
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Baby Cashmere — Dark Zen
88 × 60 × 66cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01





PIERRE JEANNERET
Committee Chair, 1955-6
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Baby Camelhair
88 × 60 × 66cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01



PIERRE JEANNERET
High Court Sofa, 1955
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Baby Camelhair
79 × 145 × 78cm

High Court, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01





PIERRE JEANNERET
Easy Cane 'Safari' Sofa (Two Seater), 1955 - 56
Teak & Loro Piana Interiors Incas Alpaca and Wool Cushion — Café Noir
80 × 102 × 70cm

Chandigarh, India



PIERRE JEANNERET
Demountable Chair, 1955
Teak, Cane, Loro Piana Interiors Sherpas Cashmere Cushion - Samprass
66 × 61 × 63.5cm

Private homes, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02



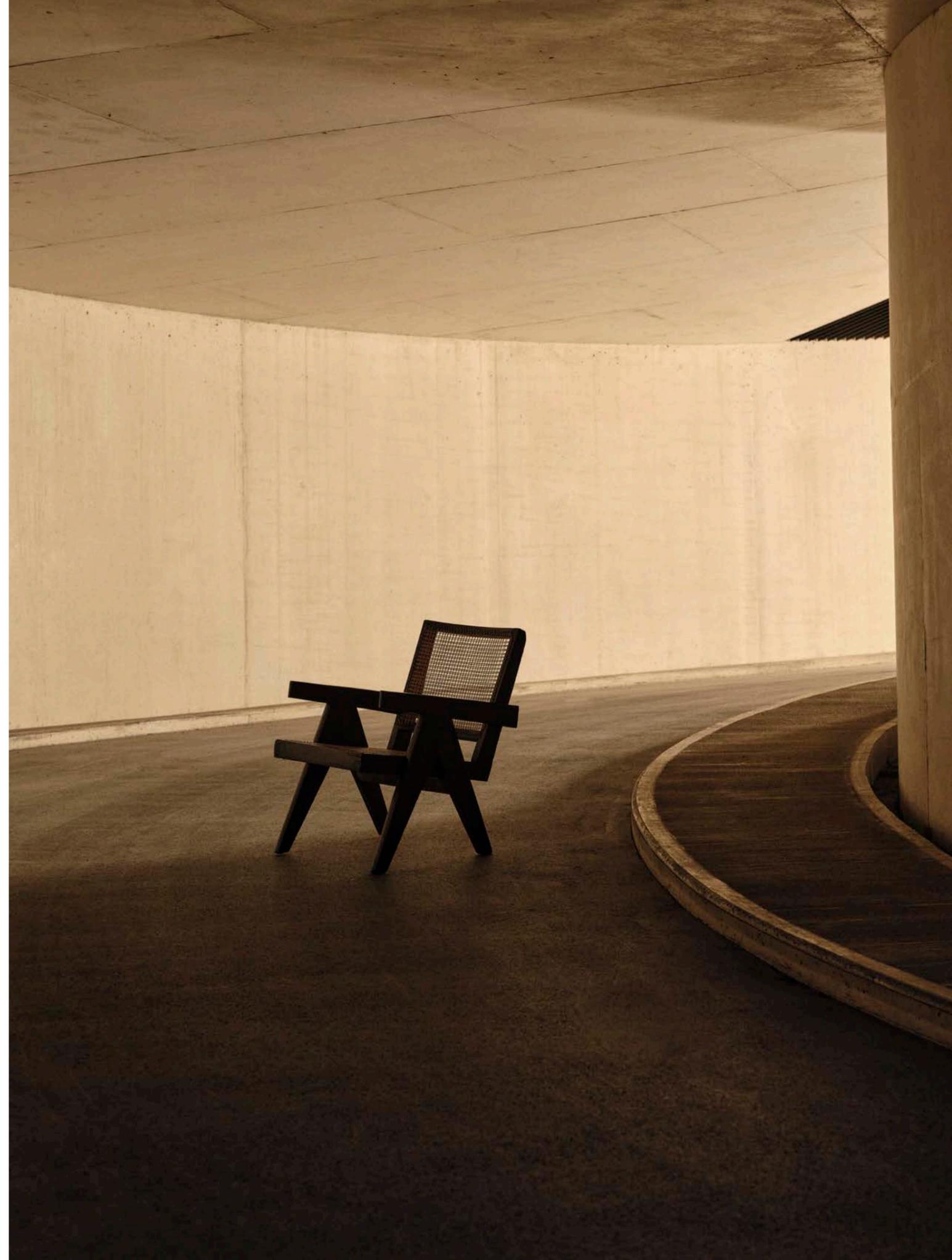




PIERRE JEANNERET
Easy Chair, 1956
Teak
76.5 × 54 × 63cm

Punjab University, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02





PIERRE JEANNERET
Sloped Back Office Chair, 1956
Teak
77 × 50 × 45cm

Secreteriat, Capital Complex, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 06



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0.11.11.11.11



PIERRE JEANNERET
Small Box Chair, 1960
Rosewood, Loro Piana Interiors Cashmere Raw Cushion — Dark Brown
77 × 40.5 × 46.5cm

Chandigarh, India

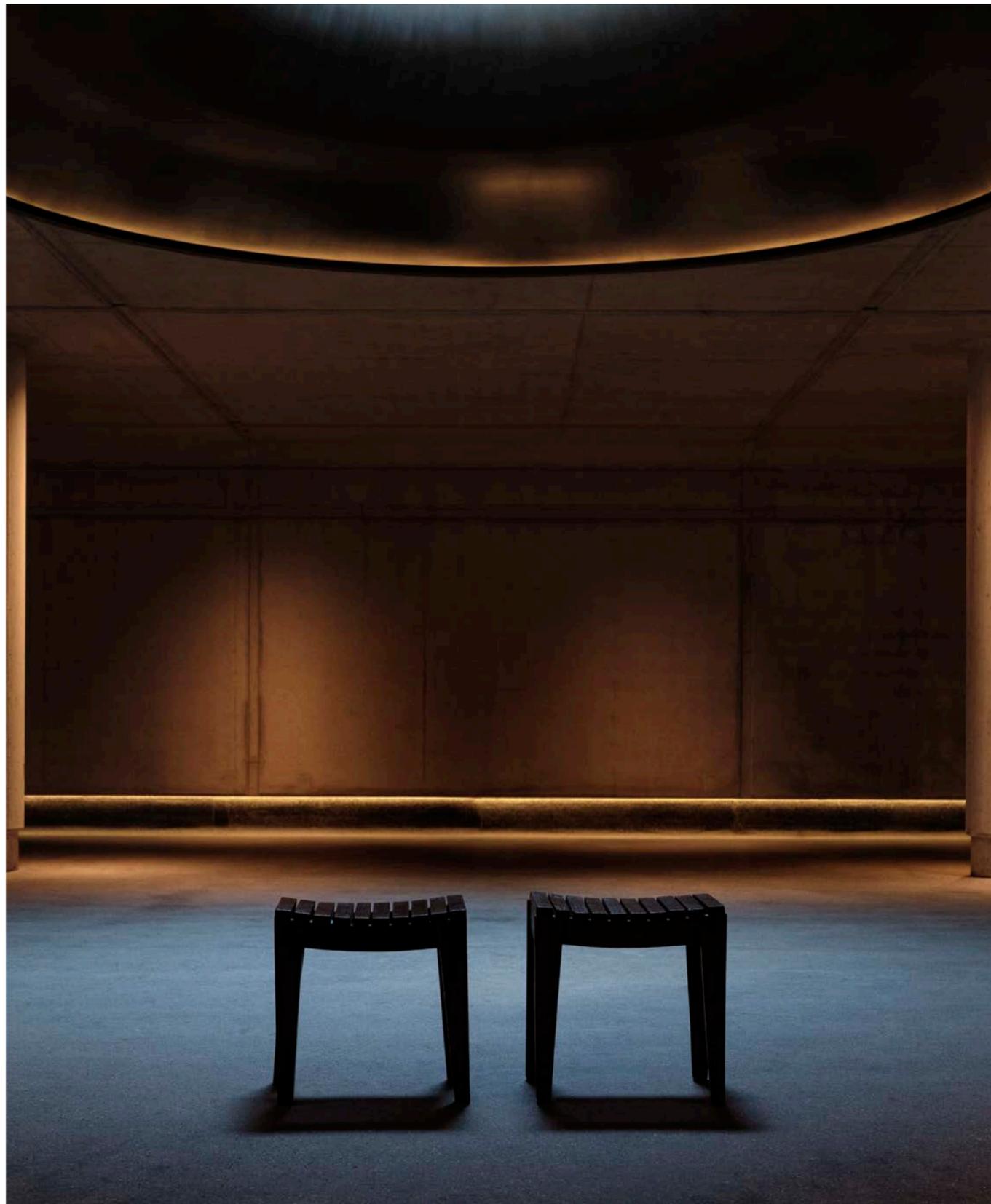
Qty: 06



PIERRE JEANNERET
Slatted Bench, 1955-6
Teak
46 × 137 × 46cm

M.L.A Hostel/Flats, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01



PIERRE JEANNERET
Slatted Low Stool, 1960
Teak
46 × 45 × 31cm

Private homes, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02



PIERRE JEANNERET
Medium Iron Stool, 1960
Teak, Iron
61 × 33cm

Punjab University, Chandigarh, India



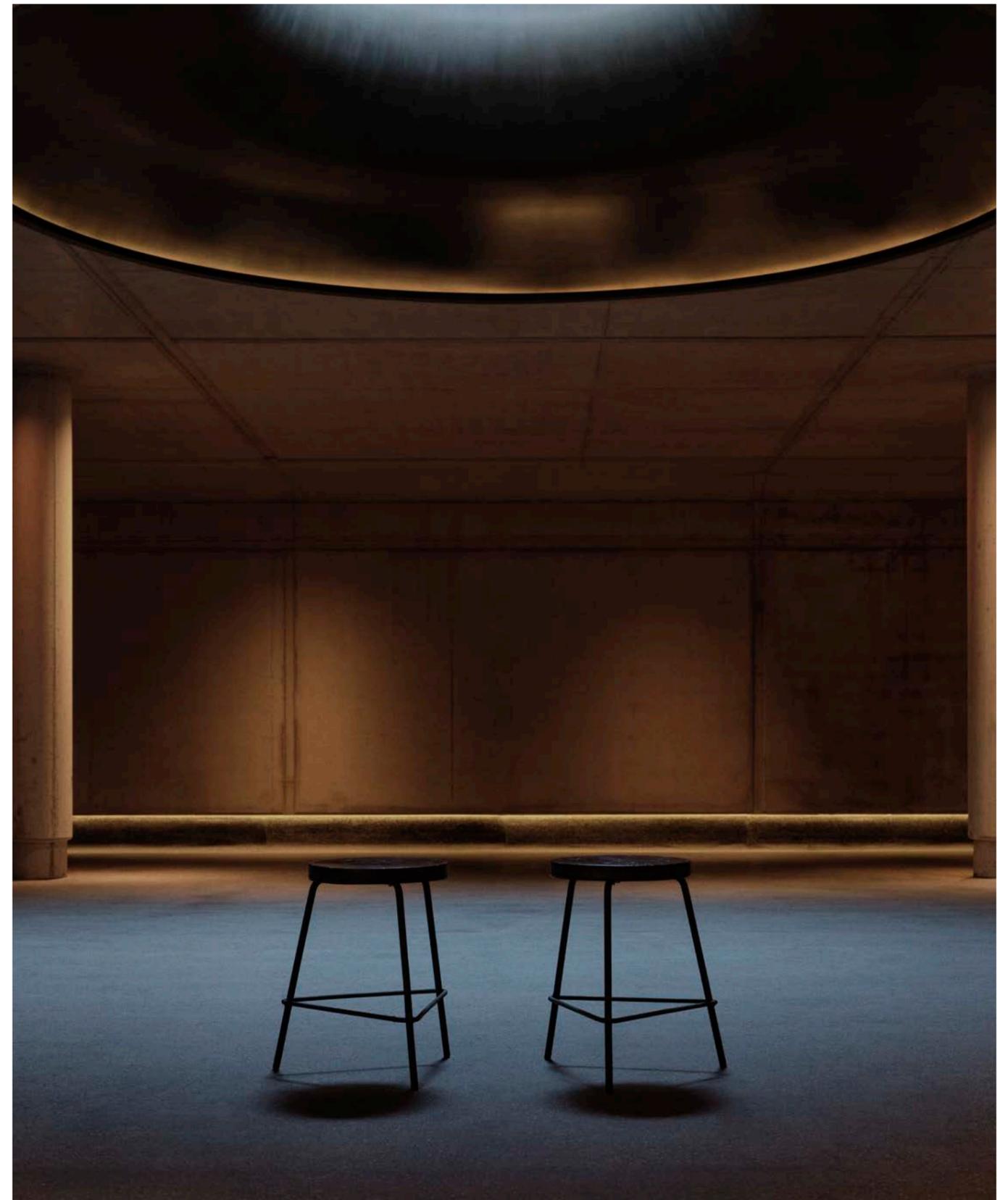
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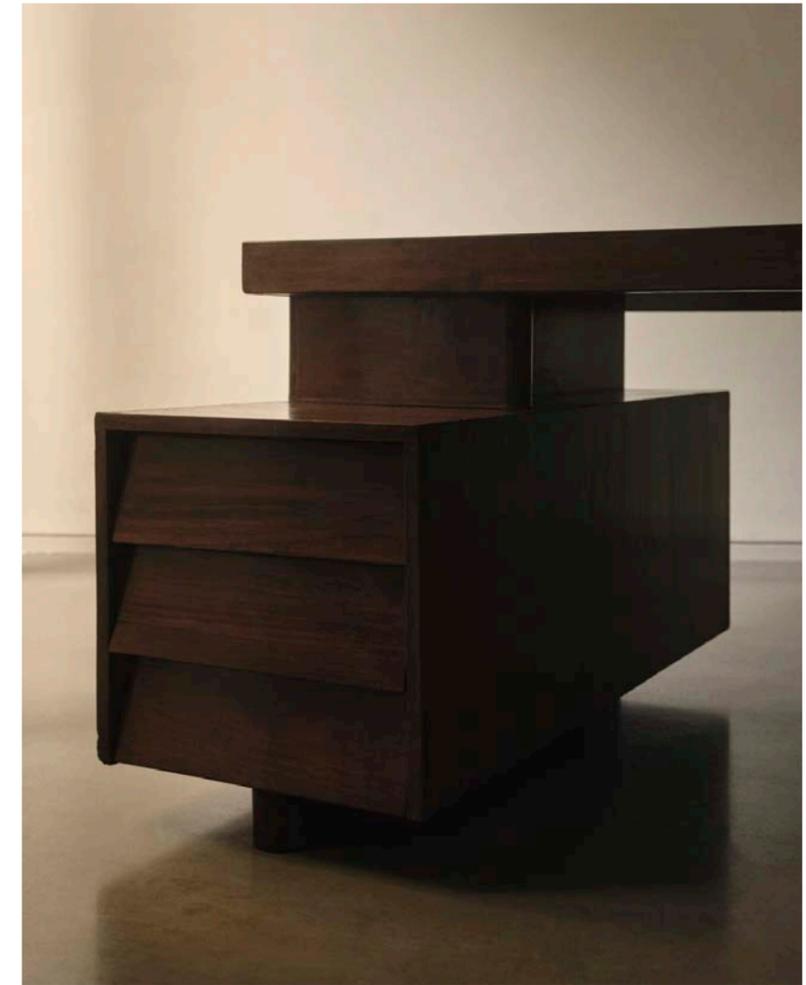


PIERRE JEANNERET
Small Iron Stool, 1960
Teak, Iron
50 × 33cm

College of Architecture, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02





LE CORBUSIER
Executive Desk, 1954
Teak
74 × 185 × 144cm
Chandigarh, India





PIERRE JEANNERET
Clerk Desk, 1957-8
Sissoo Rosewood
71 × 123 × 84cm

Secreteriat, Capital Complex, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02







PIERRE JEANNERET
Five Hole File Rack, 1957-8
Sissoo Rosewood
81 × 67 × 37cm

Secreteriat, Capital Complex, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01







PIERRE JEANNERET
Portable Magazine Rack, 1960-1
Teak
68.6 × 92.7 × 36.8cm

Assembly, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 02







PIERRE JEANNERET
Dining Table, 1960
Teak
76 × 183 × 90cm

Chandigarh, India

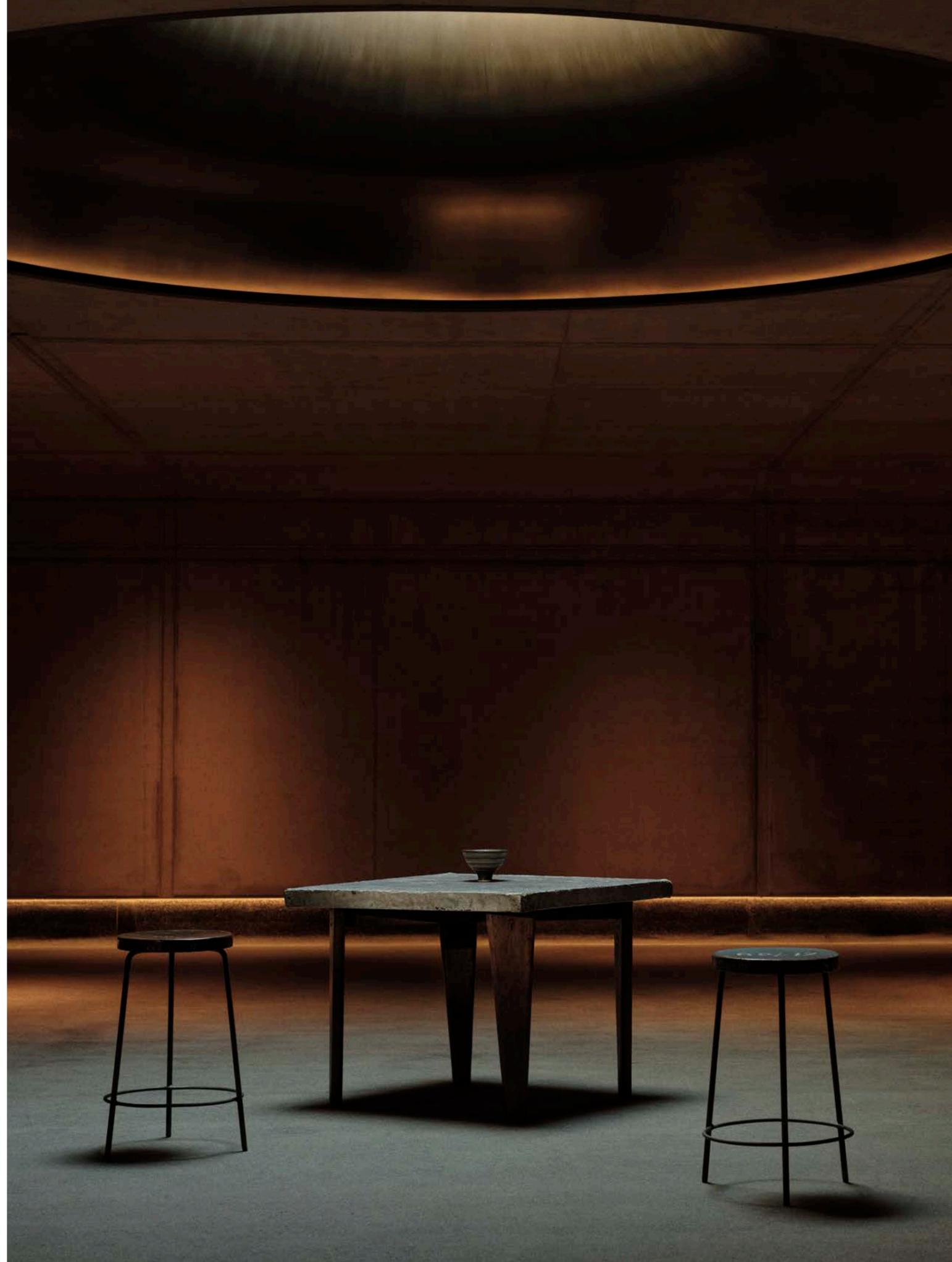
Qty: 02



PIERRE JEANNERET
Square Zinc Table
Zinc, Teak
71 × 91.5 × 91.5cm

Mechanical Engineering College, Chandigarh, India

Qty: 01



LUCIE RIE



1902 – 1995



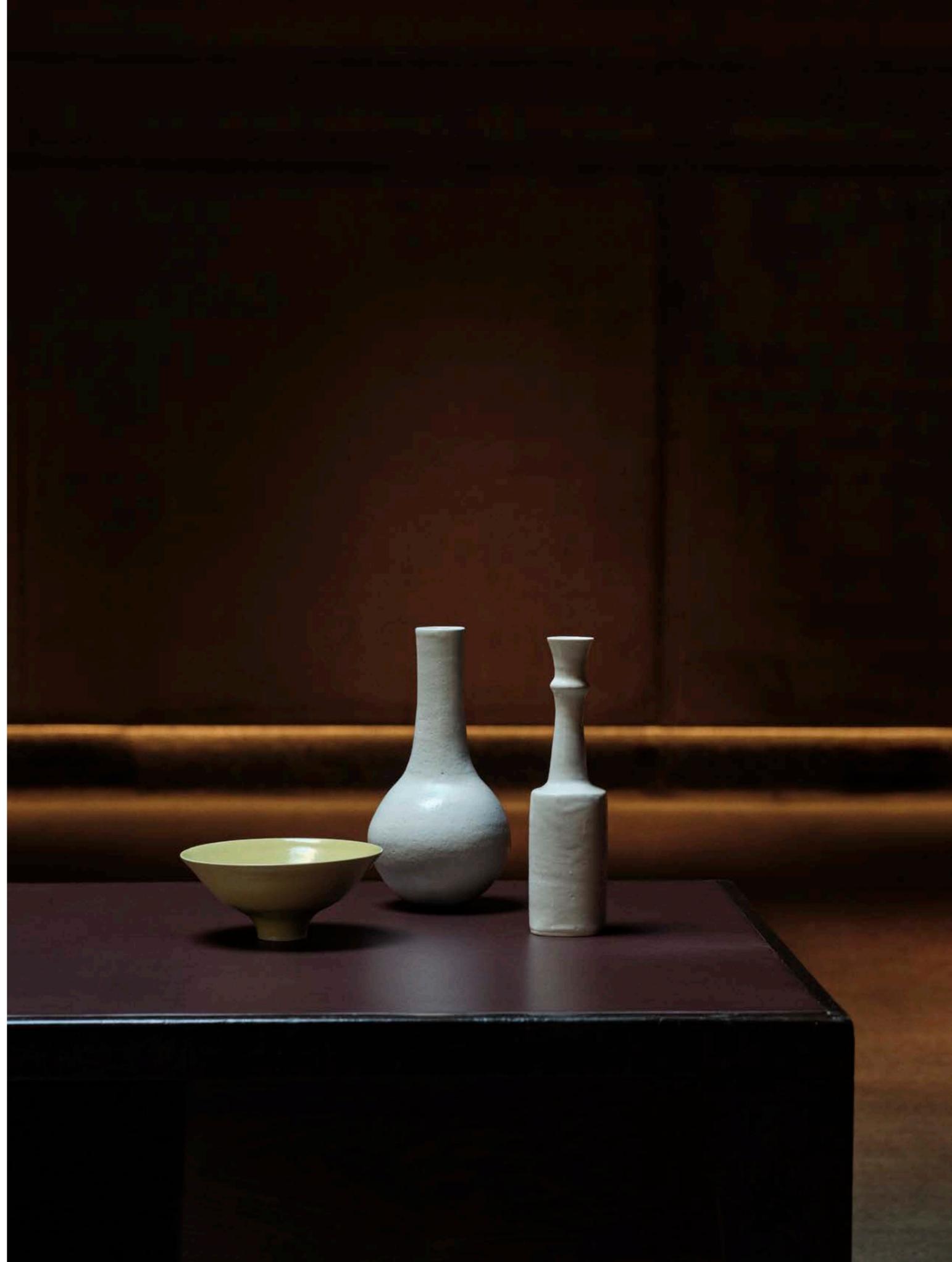
LUCIE RIE
Vienna Period Cup and Saucer, c. 1936
Earthenware, terra sigillata.
5cm high, 16cm wide
Each painted L. R. G./WIEN

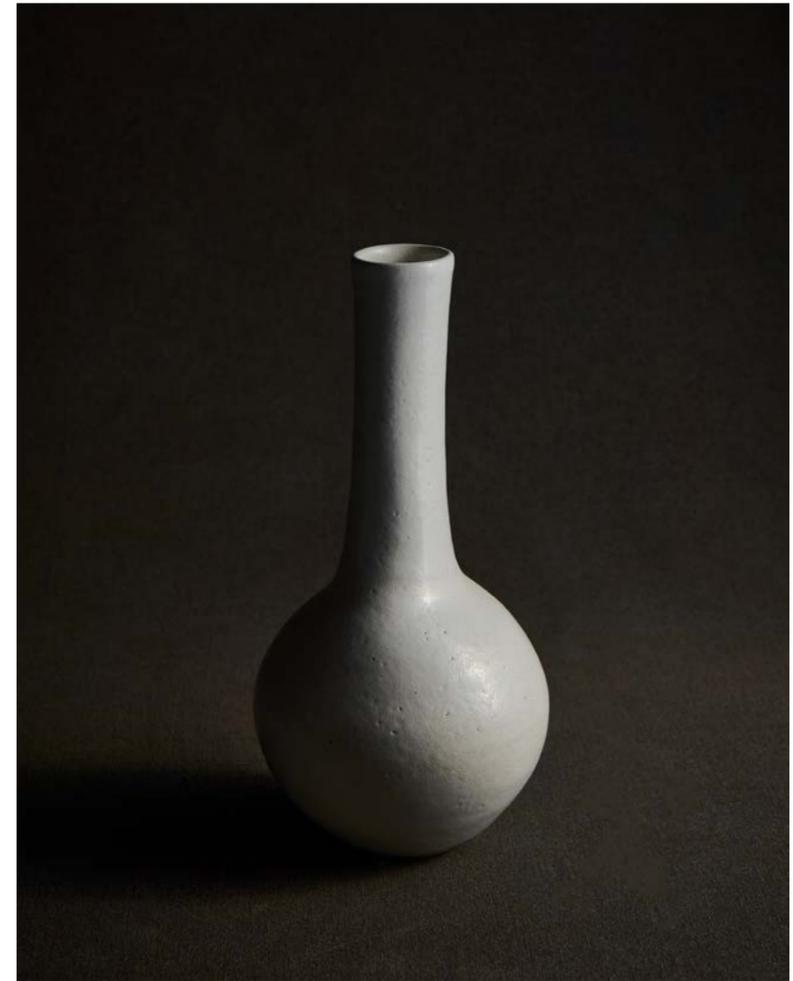


LUCIE RIE
Squared vase, c. 1976
Porcelain, shiny white glaze.
27.6cm high
Underside impressed with Artist's seal



LUCIE RIE
Footed bowl, c. 1970
Porcelain 'American' yellow glaze
8 cm high, 18.5 cm diameter
Underside impressed with artist's seal and with applied label "LR 463"





LUCIE RIE
Vase, c. 1972
Stoneware, shiny white pitted glaze
27.6 cm high
Underside impressed with artist's seal and with paper label "Lucie Rie/No. 2."



LUCIE RIE
Knitted Bowl, c. 1980
Stoneware, light grey with a radiating design, bands around the well, lip and foot, and manganese inlay.
10cm high, 28cm wide
Underside impressed with Artist's seal



LUCIE RIE
Footed bowl, c. 1982
Stoneware, pitted cream, light green, and pink glaze with manganese rim.
10.2 cm high, 23 cm diameter
Underside impressed with artist's seal



LUCIE RIE
Footed bowl, c. 1986
Stoneware, volcanic grey glaze, golden manganese band around lip.
8.6 cm high, 16.6 cm diameter
Underside impressed with artist's seal





LUCIE RIE
Footed bowl, c. 1980
Porcelain with a golden manganese glaze, terracotta banding with sgraffito decoration and a turquoise ring to the interior and exterior
10.5cm high, 15.5cm wide
Underside impressed with artist's seal



LUCIE RIE
Tall vase with flaring lip, c. 1980
Porcelain, golden manganese glaze with sgraffito band inside the rim.
31.6cm high, 14.8cm wide
Underside impressed with artist's seal





LUCIE RIE
"Byzantine" vase, c. 1978
Porcelain, golden manganese glaze with sgraffito band around the
shoulder and inside the rim.
27.6cm high, 11.5cm wide
Underside impressed with artist's seal



LUCIE RIE
Vase with flaring lip, c. 1974
Porcelain, manganese glaze, with radiating sgraffito inlaid lines to shoulder and the neck.
24.3cm high, 12.8cm wide
Underside impressed with artist's seal



CREDITS

Designed and edited by Chloe Redston
Text by Chloe Redston
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Artwork by Frank Auerbach © Frankie Rossi Art Projects
All artwork by Lucie Rie © The Estate of Lucie Rie

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