



Left At his island house in Bali, Jérôme Abel Seguin's "wooden wall" separates the main room and the verandah.

Right The interior of Seguin's dining room features some of his huge stock of 20-year-old teak that he uses to make his furniture.



JEROME ABEL SEGUIN

PROFILE

BORN:

Bordeaux, France, 1950

EDUCATED:

Ecole Boule, Paris
Ecole des Beaux Arts,
Paris

PRINCIPAL COMMISSIONS:

Furniture and sculpture for
Hermes, Air France, Louis
Vuitton, Club Méditerranée,
Aman resorts, Meridien
Island Woods Exhibition,
Galerie d'Art Archide, Paris,
1994

After a successful career as a sculptor in Paris and Sao Paolo, Brazil, Seguin went to Bali in the mid-1980s, fell in love with it as Gauguin had Tahiti a century earlier, and decided to stay. He made several visits to the islands of Indonesia before settling on Sumbawa, where he built his house and workshop. In the 1990s, other European artists and designers followed in his "escapist" footsteps, in order to design natural homes, Modern in spirit, a long way from the cultural and physical climate of "hothouse" London, Paris, or Berlin.

What drew him to Indonesia, apart from the climate and natural beauty, was the remarkable choice of unfamiliar materials with which he could work. He originally sculpted in glass, mirror-glass, and plaster; now he works in pieces of old wood – santigi, jackwood, teak, and kalengo – that he buys from Javanese merchants, island boatmen, and fishermen. Whatever wood he finds, he transforms into original pieces of furniture carved with traditional tools and hand polished. Among these are beds, chaise longues, benches, tables, consoles, and screens. Seguin also makes abstract sculptural works based on the natural forms he sees while walking through the forest, or else based on vernacular architecture. He has become a kind of Robinson Crusoe of the design world, creating Modern yet natural forms from the things he sees and the materials he comes across day-to-day in his "desert island" retreat.