

A woman with short brown hair, wearing a grey sleeveless dress with a white belt, stands next to a large, vintage-style floor lamp. The lamp has a large, white, oval-shaped shade and a metal tripod base. She is leaning her right hand on the lamp's base. The background is dark with several ornate, gold-colored wall sconces. The floor is made of dark wood.

COVET |

GUIDING LIGHT

Catheline van den Branden puts an iconic 20th-century lamp at the top of her wish list. BY ANNE VICKMAN

As president and executive director of the French Cultural Center in Boston, Catheline van den Branden values both history and European design. No doubt that's why she fell for this sculptural floor lamp (\$5,000), crafted by Spanish designer Mario Fortuny in 1907, as soon as she spotted it at South Boston's Machine Age. The legendary piece is "functional and resolutely modern and elegant," says van den Branden, who imagines it fitting perfectly in a large space like a loft. "It has a very masculine side to it, but in the right light, it's also very subtle."