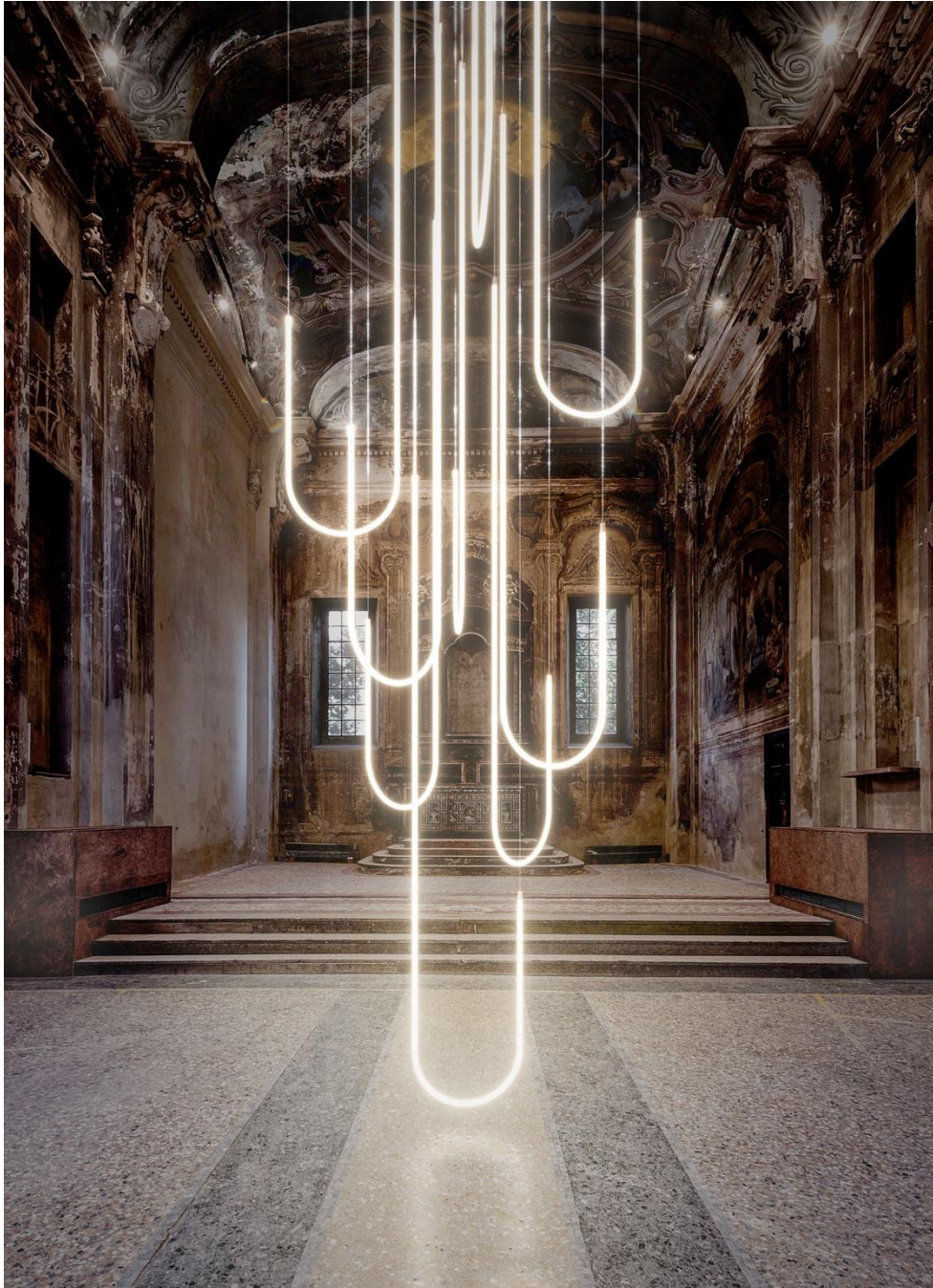


Φ GALERIE PHILIA



DESACRALIZED

MILAN DESIGN WEEK

18 - 23 APRIL 2023

CHURCH OF SAN VITTORE E 40 MARTIRI, MILAN

For the 2023 edition of **Milan Design Week**, Galerie Philia is delighted to present **Desacralized**, an offsite exhibition featuring over 20 established and emerging international designers, each exploring the concept of desaccralisation.

Staged in San Vittore e 40 Martiri, a deconsecrated church located in the centre of Milan, **Desacralized** is the first major exhibition to take place in this space. Originally built in the 11th century, the edifice closed for worship in the late 18th century and has since served many purposes for the local community. Most recently, it was used as a basketball court and playground.

It is this long and rich history and, most notably, the transformation of the church into a secular building that has inspired Galerie Philia to conceive this exhibition. Each designer was invited to give their personal interpretation of the notion of desaccralisation and take inspiration from objects which formerly had religious associations and have now become solely functional, serving our everyday life. The only imperative the group collectively agreed on was that the works created should be entirely white.

At the centre of the exhibition is a monumental chandelier by Italian design duo **Morghen Studio**. Titled *Cascades of Light*, this sculptural installation transcends and sublimates the iconic significance of the historic chandelier, offering visitors a transformative experience of light. **Studiopepe** has created a small architectural marble table inspired by the ancient baptisteries in Italy – the table has six sides to represent spiritual balance and has an uneven top referencing the unfinished 'Non Finito' by Michelangelo. **Pietro Franceschini** shows a curvature coffee table, playing with the concept of materiality and transformation, whilst **Kar Studio** showcases a chair inspired by China's oldest script from the Shang Dynasty. In her abstract light sculptures, **Elsa Foulon** explores the use of seashells, a motif omnipresent in the iconography of Christianity and the history of art. We used marble, a material that is part of our vocabulary, a material with a strong connection with sacral architecture and objects.

Key international designers will also unveil 'desaccralised' creations: **Rick Owens** brings a never-before-seen chair; **Arno Declercq** shows a large scale uniquely formed dining table, using white for the first time in his work; **Henry Wilson** exhibits a *Pagoda* table lamp, inspired by the shapes of an altar and a Japanese temple; **Andrés Monnier** shows one of his eye-catching firepits made of rock; and **Pierre de Valck** showcases a fountain – a construction which historically symbolises change and life.

This year's exhibition in Milan concludes the third chapter in the gallery's exhibition trilogy exploring the sacred. The first iteration in 2021, entitled *Rick Owens in dialogue with Italian emerging designers*, used a postapocalyptic aesthetic to delve into the mystical and the dialogue between the ancient and contemporary ages. The second iteration in 2022 unveiled *Temenos*, Studiopepe's first collection of collectible design which explored the notion of sacredness in its anthropological and historical complexity.

Ygaël Attali, Director of Galerie Philia and curator of the exhibition says: 'Objects bear witness to the past - they carry memories and their function is defined by the era in which they were created. Sacred objects have all these qualities but they also transcend their physicality to achieve a spiritual and symbolic value. *Desacralized* is the third and last of our Milan exhibitions exploring the theme of sacredness and seeks to question the notion of desaccralisation, in both its emotional and spiritual manifestations.'

NOTES TO EDITORS

PARTICIPATING DESIGNERS AND ARTISTS

Andres Monnier (Mexico), Arno Declercq (Belgium), Boldizar Senteski (Hungary), Draga & Aurel (Serbia/Germany), Elisa Uberti (France), Elsa Foulon (France), Faina (Ukraine), Flora Temnouche (France), Frédéric Saulou (France), Henry Wilson (Australia), Imperfettolab (Italy), Isac Elam Kaid (Canada), Jan Garncarek (Poland), Kar Studio (China), Laura Pasquino (Holland), Lucas Morten (Sweden), Morghen (Italy), Niclas Wolf (Germany), Pietro Franceschini (Italy), Pierre de Valck (Belgium), Rick Owens (US), Samuel Costantini (Italy), Studiopepe (Italy), Willem van Hooff (Holland) and William Guillon (France).

ABOUT GALERIE PHILIA

Launched in 2015, Galerie Philia is an international contemporary design and modern art gallery representing emerging and established designers and artists. The gallery is the brainchild of two brothers who share a lifetime passion for art, literature, and philosophy. Their distinct academic background sets them apart from their peers, as it sees them following a rhizomatic and transcultural approach in the way they select works. This involves combining elements from multiple cultures in what becomes a network of harmoniously interconnected roots, ultimately revealing the beauty of each unique creation. The gallery's non-hierarchical curation sits apart from the ephemerality of trends and focuses instead on the true aesthetic quality of the piece – alluring and timeless. Unlike others, Galerie Philia does not focus on a single style – whether minimalist, organic or raw – but rather embraces heterogeneity.

The gallery takes pride in discovering new talents, providing them with multiple international platforms to showcase their latest creations. Such designers include Elisa Uberti (France), Studiopepe (Italy), Arno Declercq (Belgium), Pietro Franceschini (Italy) and Evan Fay (USA). As well as propelling the newest generation of 21st century collectible design, Galerie Philia also works with renowned practitioners such as Cristián Mohaded (Mexico), Jérôme Pereira (France) and Rick Owens (USA).

Galerie Philia has a strong international presence, with galleries in Geneva, New York, Singapore and Mexico City. In addition to their permanent spaces, the gallery organises temporary group exhibitions and artists residencies in first-class locations around the world.

www.galerie-philias.com

Practical Information:

Address: San Vittore e 40 Martiri, Viale Lucania, 18, 20139 Milano MI, Italy

Exhibition dates: 18 – 23rd April 2023

Press preview: 18 & 19th April 2023

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