

Φ PHILIA

CELESTIAL ATTRACTION

Philia to stage first solo show dedicated to French designer and sculptor Jérôme Pereira during Milan Design Week

At the crossroads of science and art, the designer sculpts wood to tell the tale of the universe

Spazio CB32, 16-21 April 2024



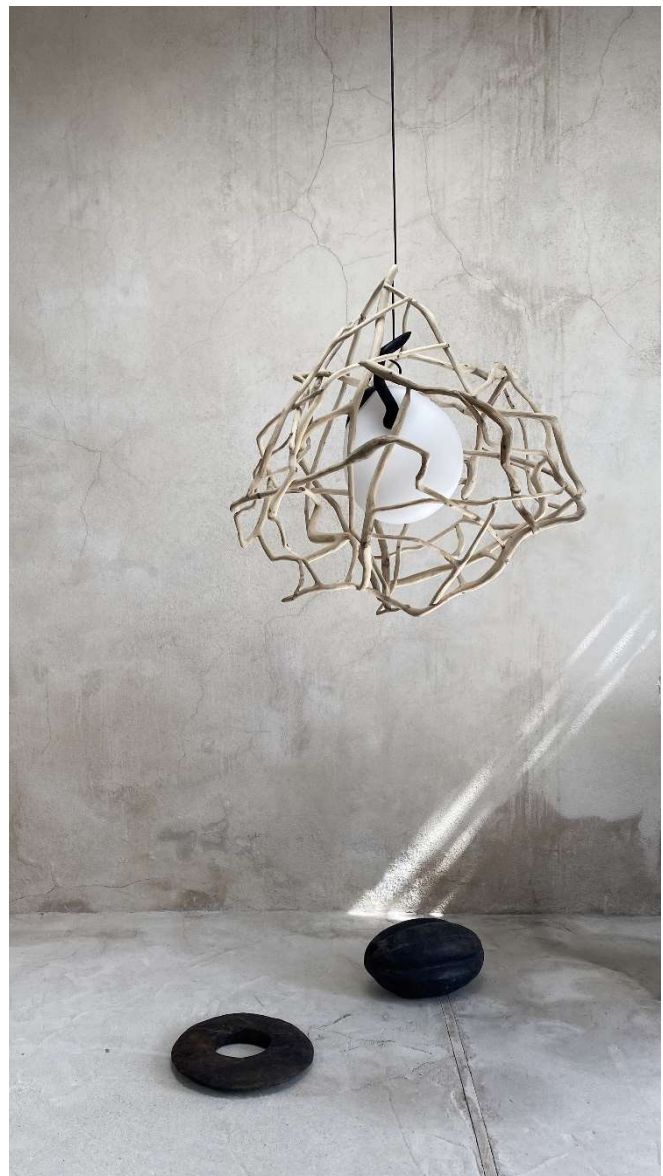
"To perceive the world in all its facets, poetic and scientific approaches complement each other. Each is important for understanding the world. Each in its own way, gives us access to the wealth and beauty of the universe." **Hubert Reeves**

A year after the acclaimed *Desacralized* exhibition in the deconsecrated church of San Vittore e 40 Martiri, Philia returns to **Milan Design Week** with the first solo exhibition dedicated to the French designer and sculptor Jérôme Pereira. ***Celestial Attraction***, on view at the **Spazio CB32** (near Fondazione Prada) from 16 until 21 April, invites visitors to delve into the poetic universe of an artist trained in geophysics. Pereira's lighting sculptures, which seamlessly blend art and science, illuminate some of today's most distinctive interiors. Having explored the theme of sacredness in their last three Milanese exhibitions, Philia now proposes a reflection on the relationship between science and art – a question that has captivated philosophers since antiquity and has resulted in masterpieces, such as the works of Leonardo da Vinci.

For his inaugural Milan show, Jérôme Pereira has conceived nine unique designs in his signature material: wood. Presented alongside two textile works by **Sylvia Eustache Rools**, also created especially for the exhibition, these pieces of raw beauty capture the artistic language developed by Pereira over the past twenty years - an organic aesthetics of lines and curves, particles and nuclei shaped by the laws of gravity and attraction. They also serve as a testament to the designer's fascination with the cosmos, natural phenomena and great scientific theories, from Archimedes' inventions to Einstein's discoveries.

The concept of balance and the constants in physics lie at the heart of Pereira's work. Similar to mathematical and physical equations, his "mobiles" in wood and glass achieve a subtle and delicate equilibrium. Four of these lighting sculptures will be unveiled in Milan, all constructed with tree branches and pieces of wood found in the forests near the designer's studio in the South of France. The glass components have been produced in collaboration with a master glassmaker.

As in Pereira's seminal Planck chandelier (an homage to Max Planck, the originator of quantum theory, illustrated right), these monumental pieces draw inspiration from science and space. Named after asteroid nomenclature, ***SI-02*** features a long, sculpted ash branch floating above the ground, illuminated at its top extremity by a round shape in blown glass. It is evocative of the meteorites and comets thought to be at the origins of life on earth – a theme also explored in ***Messenger II***. In this piece, an arched axis suspends, on one side, a delicate round blown glass pendant, and on the other, a large mass in which ash and oak wood combine to form a large, irregular, meteor-like shape. For ***Icarus***, the designer imagined a frail wing made of an assembly of oak branches, with a round opaque glass light hanging "like a lantern in the depth of the interstellar night".



The six other pieces created for this exhibition, including a table, a floor lamp, a tripod lamp and a sculpture, highlight the importance of nature and the respect for living materials in Pereira's practice. "Not working the wood but with the wood", he embraces the natural lines and shapes of the material to produce pieces of imperfect beauty, bearing the traces of their fabrication.

The passage of time and natural transformations are also central of Sylvia Eustache Rools' work. In Milan, the artist will unveil new textile pieces – a wall hanging and a sculpture - both emblematic of her enigmatic silk creations. Resembling geological and archaeological artefacts, these works result from a process involving oxidation, vegetal macerations, and tinctorial explorations using ink and natural tannins.

Ygaël Attali, co-founder of Philia says: *"Jérôme Pereira's sculptural work embodies a tangible contemplation of the intricate interplay between balance and gravity. It is with immense pride that we host his inaugural solo exhibition, recognizing him as a prominent luminary in the realm of contemporary sculpture. The poetic and philosophical depth of his works adds a profound layer to the contemporary artistic landscape."*

NOTES TO EDITORS

ABOUT JÉRÔME PEREIRA

Born in the South of France in 1968, Jérôme Pereira lives and works in Lodève, near Montpellier. Passionate about geology and speleology since his childhood, he studies physics and geophysics before turning to research and teaching. While doing his national service in the Czech Republic in the early 1990, he discovered sculpture and started creating works made of upcycled materials. Back in France, he was introduced to wood sculpting and developed his practice, through improvised exhibitions in the street of Marseille and trips to Mali and Burkina Faso where he learned new techniques (hand woodcarving with an adze, bronze casting etc.).

In 2004, he created his first lighting sculptures and began dedicating himself to sculptural design and the production of unique and functional pieces. Since 2013, he is also part of AWARÉ, the artistic duo he forms with his partner, French textile artist Sylvia Eustache Rools. Together, they realise sculptural object in wood and textile which bear witness to their mutual fascination for geology and archeology. In 2022, the duo was finalist of the LOEWE FOUNDATION Craft Prize and one of their works was exhibited at the SEMOCA, Seoul Museum of Craft Art. Represented by Philia since 2015, Jérôme Pereira's work has been part of numerous exhibitions in France and abroad.

ABOUT SYLVIA EUSTACHE ROOLS

Sylvia Eustache Rools was born in France in 1978 and graduated from the Duperré School of Applied Arts. Inspired by her creole origins and frequents sojourns in Japan, her textile creations showcase her passion for colours, textiles and her distinctive eye for composition. She coined the expression "textile geology" to describe the mineral and organic look of her creation. Resembling rock and geological layer, the texture she creates result from a complex process of oxidation, tinctorial maceration and ink on textile. Her work and the pieces she created as part as the AWARÉ duo have been exhibition in France, the UK, Korea and more recently, in Germany.

ABOUT PHILIA

Launched in 2015, 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, 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, Elsa Foulon (France), Andres Monnier (Mexico), Pierre de Valck (Belgium), Laura Pasquino (Netherlands), Evan Fay (USA) and Kar (China). As well as propelling the newest generation of 21st century collectible design, Philia also works with renowned practitioners such as Cristián Mohaded (Argentina), Jérôme Pereira (France), Studiopepe (Italy), Morghen Studio (Italy), and Rick Owens (USA).

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. More information on www.galerie-phia.com

PHILIA & THE DESIGN MILAN WEEK

Celestial attraction marks Philia's fourth participation in the Milan Design Week and follows a trilogy of exhibitions 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. It was followed in 2022 by [Temenos](#), Studiopepe's first collection of collectible design which explored the notion of sacredness in its anthropological and historical complexity. Last year, [Desacralized](#) explored the theme of desacralisation and brought together twenty established and emerging international designers in the deconsecrated church of San Vittore e 40 Martiri.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition: *Celestial Attraction*

When: 16-21 April 2024, 11am-7pm

Where: Spazio CB32, Via Cesare Balbo, 32, 20136 Milano

Press days: 16-17 April 2024, 11am-7pm

PRESS CONTACT

REIBER PR

Ella Roeg (UK/USA Press)

E : ella@reiberpr.com

Marie-Béatrice Morin (European Press)

E: marie-b@reiberpr.com

+44 7809316295