

PROUVÉ / ARAD MASTERS OF METAL

OPENING ON NOVEMBER 14TH STARTING 6PM



Laffanour
Galerie
Downtown
Paris

18 RUE DE SEINE, 75006

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PROUVÉ/ARAD: MASTERS OF METAL

Is it art or design? This is the main question that the Laffanour | Galerie Downtown puts into the spotlight, bringing together for the first time in their space on Rue de Seine, the works of two great artists Jean Prouvé and Ron Arad, who both shared a passion for metal and its functionality. Entitled "Masters of Metal", the exhibition will be running until 18 December.

When I arrive at the show space on Thursday morning, I am greeted by Ron Arad himself, impeccably dressed in Issey Miyake (as he says: "Can you guess the designer? It's my friend! Nobody does fashion like him these days"), he arrived in Paris for one day from London. A legend of contemporary design, known for his bold designs that defy the conventions of classical furniture, Arad tells a story of how passionate he has always been about Jean Prouvé. He even once got in trouble at his university library for not bringing back a book about Jean Prouvé on time. When he found the very same book again not so long ago, he just realised how much Prouvé's ideas always resonated with his own. And so the project was born.



RON ARAD © RUTH DUPRÉ / NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY, LONDON

The joint show at Laffanour | Galerie Downtown masterfully blends the metal works of two masterminds. Prouvé, who developed a fascination for metal from his early days as an ironworker and cherished it throughout his prolific career, had a preference for sheet steel. In the show space you will spot his elegant, functional and durable “Standard Chairs”, as well as “Cité” bed, the “Dollander” desk shelf or a Steel door with portholes, that became a new collector’s favourite (probably, because the Row sisters found a new functionality to it, using it as a sliding door in the fitting rooms in their newly-inaugurated Parisian boutique). His follower, contemporary designer Ron Arad, in turn, has always been passionate about metal and made it one of his fetish materials. At the exhibition you can see and try to sit in his red and black “BLO-VOID 3” chair, representing his experimental audacity, the “Pappardelle” chair, which can fold and unfold changing its form endlessly, and have a look at the “This Mortal Coil” spiral bookcase, illustrating how Arad can transcend the function of the object to turn it into a genuine work of art.



But probably the most important object of the exhibition, and the one that has a very special place in Arad's heart is the "Twenty-Four Chair", which he designed as a tribute to Jean Prouvé in 2004 based on a sketch of a mysterious chair, that Prouvé thought of creating but never realised in real life. To complete this tribute, Ron Arad has written a sentence on the back of the chair, laser-cut from an aluminum plate on a red leather background, with a good dose of humour: "No one, except maybe Prouvé, has ever seen the back of this 1924 chair. Ron Arad, 2023". To see it, you just need to walk on Rue de Seine and look at the Laffanour | Galerie Downtown glass window.



CHAISE TWENTY-FOUR, 2004 METAL AND LEATHER H. 88 X L. 63,5 X D. 86 CM © ALESSANDRO PADERNI 3



Prouvé/Arad: Masters of Metal, at the Laffanour | Galerie Downtown, 18 Rue de Seine, Paris until December 14.

Courtesy: Prouvé

Text: Lidia Ageeva