

Kukje Gallery, 28/02/2005-31/03/2005

Jean Prouvé

Iconic figures of the twentieth-century design, Jean Prouve, Charlotte Perriand, Serge Mouille, Georges Jouve and Le Corbusier were all known for their surprising uses of humble materials and their abilities to create functional, refined furniture that also conformed to the requirements of large-scale production. Combining craftsmanship and artistic values with the new technology of the "machine age," the avant-garde work of these great innovators had intense originality and outstanding contribution to modern design.

Jean Prouve (1901-1984) was the first to introduce the use of sheet steel and aluminum into the production of furniture, as well as prefab elements into architecture. Originally trained as an iron worker, he always strived for the most structurally and materially efficient designs. His works have been the source of inspiration for contemporary architects such as Renzo Piano, Norman Foster and Jean Nouvel.

Charlotte Perriand (1903-1999) became known for her sleek furniture created with innovative materials such as copper and steel. Since the 1930s, she worked frequently with Jean Prouve, developing a series of innovative modular storage units and low-cost residential furnishings. Many of these pieces are still seen as icons of the new machine age.

Born in Switzerland, Le Corbusier (1887-1965) was an architect, urban planner, painter, writer, designer and theorist, active mostly in France. He strongly believed that the new machine age called for a new type of architecture and gave a firm foundation to the worldwide avant-garde architectural movement he created.

Serge Mouille (1922-1988) started to design lighting fixtures in 1953, an art to which he devoted the rest of his life. He created large, angular, insect-like standing and wall mounted lamps with several arms and smaller, more curved wall-sconces. His work achieved a kinetic, sculptural aesthetic that evoked a sense of movement in space.

Georges Jouve (1910-1964) became a ceramist during the Second World War. By developing unique techniques and style, he took pottery over into the realms of sculpture, beyond the limited conception of everyday household items. He is one of the rare ceramists to have been commissioned for public contracts, working alongside architects.