

Alchemy

Victoria Wilmotte

Opening on Thursday, November 17th

Exhibition from November 17th until December 17th

Radical lines through their simplicity, preference for folded steel and a particular attention to finishing touches are at the core of Victoria Wilmotte's work. The early signs of her art appeared as soon as she graduated from the Royal College of Art in London in 2008 for which she already used steel and drew trestle and polygon shapes. These two recurring geometrical forms, along with the zigzags and facets, are typical of her expression. She also uses the folding, «an absolute obsession», as a shaping method. When the detail of a line or a finishing touch are of interest to her, she keeps exploring it, thinking of it at different scales and for various functions. This is how this true metal alchemist imagines furniture, lights and accessories ensembles.

Victoria Wilmotte creates by doing, eager to put her ideas to the test. From the drawing board to the prototype, you only need to climb a few steps in her studio to walk into the building workshop - VW Factory - mainly dedicated to metal work. In this workshop, you can find all the necessary manually operated machines to fold, roll, weld and pierce this material. This is not only a place to make prototypes, it is also a place where she produces limited series or unique custom pieces herself. From a template created through drawing, the designer then tames her favourite material, which can have an industrial or luxurious aspect depending on the way it is approached, and of the chosen surface treatment. «Steel can be PVC coated, bichromated, thermo-lacquered, galvanised, plated, copper cladded, etc.». It is precisely a particular finishing touch which is at the origin of the pieces that are showcased at the galerie Jousse Entreprise. The aluminium textured paint, which was discovered by our designer amongst some maker's samples, immediately seduced her. The vermiculated surface and its relief give a strong presence to the objects. They show variations around the zigzag shape, which, depending on the piece, is used as a support, a pattern or a structure. Some of them are a continuation of recent pieces. It is the case of the mirror with its coloured and silver glass plates made in Murano, which is the follow-up of a project produced for The Venice Glass Week 2022. The entire exhibition has been produced at the VW Factory. For this occasion, the team has had to cope with a technical challenge as the lamppost made of a sole sheet of material, more than three meters long, has been a complex task to model. This fuelled Victoria Wilmotte's ambition and perfectionism, for whom metal is the ideal material to translate the precision of the drawing.

Claire Fayolle