

FINANCIAL TIMES



Susan Moore

[...] There are plenty of other sustainable designs to be seen at PAD. [...] In Beirut, Tessa and Tara Sakhi work with a team of local craftsmen to produce moulded tables where the offcuts of semi-precious stones and aggregates of metal powder found in the factories surrounding their studio are set in resin (Galerie Gosserez). [...]



Studio T Sakhi's Reconciled Fragments side table © Courtesy the artists/Galerie Gosserez. Photo: Thierry Depagne

Perhaps the most unexpected collaboration represented here is between designer, artisan and silkworm. Diane de Kergal (Galerie Gosserez) designs minimalist trees of light — light sculptures with cloud- or cocoon-shaped canopies carried on elegant basswood stems. These canopies are obligingly formed by silkworms depositing their surprisingly strong silk yarn and sericin over her latex-covered plaster casts. From these, the membranes are carefully harvested. “I wanted to find a material that would capture and vibrate light,” the French designer explains. “It was very important to me that I should find something organic.”

Since her drawn forms resembled cocoons, a friend at the École Boulle suggested that she contact the entrepreneurial Clara Hardy at Sericyne, the only manufactory in France producing non-woven silk through a newly patented technique. This enterprise is reviving sericulture in the historic silk-production region of the Cévennes, rehabilitating an organic ecosystem by training silkworm breeders and planting mulberry trees on whose leaves the silkworm feed. The lamp stands, basswood branches echoing de Kergal’s designs, are sourced from the Brittany forest of ARCA workshop’s founder Steven Leprizé and meticulously stripped of bark and polished.



'Emergence' light sculpture by Diane de Kergal. ● Courtesy Galerie Gosserez. Photo: Thierry Depagne



...who uses silk to capture light's different qualities ● Courtesy Diane de Kergal/ Galerie Gosserez. Photo: Patrick Fouque

En masse, the Emergence lights suggest a surreal lunar forest. When turned off, the cloudy lamps seem formed of solid matter. When lit, the intertwined threads of silk of these cocoons — a promise of metamorphosis — become near-transparent. “I am an urban woman, but this project is my dialogue with nature,” says de Kergal, smiling. “There is nothing more beautiful in the world than a silkworm becoming a butterfly.”

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