



## PROUVÉ / ARAD – MASTERS OF METAL

LAFFANOUR | GALERIE DOWNTOWN  
18, rue de Seine - 75006 Paris

From November 14th to December 14th 2024

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For its new exhibition, **Prouvé / Arad - Masters of Metal**, Laffanour | Galerie Downtown is initiating a dialogue between the pragmatic vision of **Jean Prouvé** and the artistic approach of **Ron Arad**, to explore the versatility of metal and reveal its potential as a functional and artistic material.



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)** developed a fascination for metal from his early days as an ironworker alongside **Émile Robert**. This was a decisive period in the development of his aesthetic, as he saw metal as a living material, capable of interacting with its environment. Throughout his career, he redefined the possibilities of metal, particularly sheet steel, which he used to combine creative and functional innovation:



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)**

*Potence, 1951*

Body in folded sheet steel and tubular metal  
white lacquered electrical system.  
Made for the school in Vantoux, Moselle, France  
H. 286 x W.9 x D. 54.5 cm



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)**

*'Dollander' desk shelf, 1951*

Unique piece - Uprights and brackets on racks in green  
lacquered sheet steel, top, drawer and shelves in solid  
cherrywood.  
H. 207 x L. 281 x P. 70 cm

His iconic creations, such as the **'Cité'** bed from the 1950s, made from enamelled folded sheet steel and solid oak shelves, or the **'Dollander'** desk-shelf from 1951, a unique piece designed for the Villa Dollander with its green lacquered steel uprights and solid cherry wood elements, illustrate his ability to combine materials to sublimate the harmony between function and aesthetics. Another key piece in this exhibition, the 1951 **'Potence'**, designed for the Vantoux school, embodies an innovative design combining white-lacquered tubular metal and a folded steel structure.



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)**

*'Cité' bed, Ca. 1950*

Enamelled folded sheet steel, solid oak shelves,  
wooden runners.  
H. 51 x L. 215 x P. 85 cm

Each **Jean Prouvé's** creation is conceived as an overall solution, where each element must contribute to a more global experience. He particularly paid attention to articulation and assembly systems, which he used in order to reveal the beauty of his creations right down to their structure. His best example is the base of his '**Standard**' chair, designed to be elegant, ergonomic and above all durable.



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)**

*'Standard' Chairs, Ca. 1950*  
Structure in folded sheet steel, lacquered 'corsair red', seat and back in pink skai.  
H. 79.5 x L. 43 x P. 50 cm

In contrast, **Ron Arad** is a leading figure in contemporary design, known for his bold, organic creations that defy the conventions of furniture. Trained at the Architectural Association in London, he quickly explored the potential of metal, freeing it from its purely utilitarian functions to create sculptural pieces of design. For example, in his One Off series from the 1980s, **Ron Arad** exploited the flexibility and strength of metal, challenging traditional design standards and highlighting its ability to be both solid and sophisticated.



**Ron Arad (B. 1951)**

*BLO-VOID 3, 2004*  
Lacquered and anodised aluminium, woven aluminium  
Edition of 6  
Engraved Ron Arad 1/6 on bottom edge.  
H. 79 x L. 130 x P. 58 cm



**Ron Arad (B. 1951)**

*'Papardelle' chair, Ca. 1994*  
Metal  
Edition of 20 + 5EP.  
Signed R. Arad on the bottom of the seat and numbered 2/20.  
H. 110 x L. 61 x P. 87 cm

In this selection, **Laffanour | Galerie Downtown** is pleased to present 'BLO-VOID 3', made in 2004, a lacquered and anodised aluminium chair representing **Ron Arad's** experimental audacity, and 'Two legs and a table', made in 1991, a unique piece in mirror-polished and patinated steel. In addition, the 'Papardelle' chair, made around 1994, and the 'This Mortal Coil' spiral bookcase from 1993, in patinated and tempered steel, illustrate his ability to transcend the function of the object to turn it into a genuine work of art.

By pairing the works of **Jean Prouvé** and **Ron Arad**, the exhibition highlights their mutual interest in the material and its expressive potential. This interaction reveals how each of these designers use metal to explore the intersections between art and design.



**Jean Prouvé (1901-1984)**

*Two legs and a table, 1991*  
Unique piece from a set of 20 - Mirror-polished  
steel and patinated steel.  
H. 76 x L. 326 x P. 130 cm

Laffanour | Galerie Downtown also features the *Twenty-Four* chair, designed by Ron Arad as a tribute to Jean Prouvé. At the end of his university career, Ron Arad almost failed his degree for not returning a book by Jean Prouvé to the library. Some time ago, when he found the same book again, he just realised how much Jean Prouvé's ideas resonated with his own.



**Ron Arad (B.1951)**

Chaise *Twenty-Four*, 2004  
Metal and leather  
H. 88 x L. 63,5 x D. 86 cm

To highlight Jean Prouvé's influence on his aesthetic approach, Ron Arad is inspired by a mysterious chair known only from a sketch and a photograph. This enigmatic model, never seen before even to Prouvé's experts and family, such as Rolf Fehlbaum, Deyan Sudjic and Catherine and Delphine Drouin Prouvé, the designer's daughter and granddaughter.

By using a single low-resolution image, Ron Arad engaged himself in a 'forensic reconstitution' of the chair, analysing the visible details and re-examining the dimensions, materials and technical mechanisms to bring this masterpiece back to life.



To complete this tribute, **Ron Arad** has humorously written a sentence on the back of this iconic creation, laser-cut from an aluminium plate on a red leather background: 'No one, except maybe Prouvé, has ever seen the back of this 1924 chair. Ron Arad, 2023'. A bold nod to a century of visionary design.

*Twenty-Four* chair, produced in partnership with More-So in Udine, goes beyond a simple reconstruction; it embodies the essence of this exhibition, illustrating the harmonious dialogue between two great masters of design and pushing back the boundaries between homage and innovation.



**Ron Arad (B.1951)**

Chair *Twenty-Four*, 2004  
Metal and leather  
H. 88 x L. 63,5 x D. 86 cm

Credits: © Alessandro Paderni

**INFORMATION**

**Press Preview :**

November 14th, 2024 from 9.30 am to 12 pm

**Opening :**

November 14th, 2024 from 6.00 pm

**Exhibition dates :**

From November 14th to December 14th, 2024

**Adress :**

LAFFANOUR | GALERIE DOWNTOWN, 18 rue de Seine, 75006 Paris

**Gallery opening :**

Monday: closed

Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday/Saturday : 10.30 am - 1 pm / 2.00 pm to 7.00 pm

Sunday: closed



François Laffanour © DePasquale+Maffini

## ABOUT LAFFANOUR | GALERIE DOWNTOWN

Since its opening in the early 1980s, **Laffanour | Galerie Downtown**, founded by **François Laffanour**, has been dedicated to exploring the furniture of twentieth-century architects, highlighting the great names of post-war architecture.

After the Second World War, designers and architects introduced a new approach to furniture, guided by a desire for freedom and efficiency, in phase with a new art of living shaped by technological and scientific advances, as well as the sociological and social evolutions of the time.

**Laffanour | Galerie Downtown** also holds the archives of the **Steph Simon** gallery, which, from 1956 to 1974, represented and produced the work of such iconic figures as **Charlotte Perriand**, **Jean Prouvé**, **Serge Mouille**, **Georges Jouve** and **Isamu Noguchi**.



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