



**LAFFANOUR | GALERIE DOWNTOWN PARIS**

PRESENTS

**NECTAR VESSELS BRONZES  
KRIS VAN ASSCHE**

**FONDAZIONE SOZZANI MILAN**



APRIL 20 – 26, 2026

**FONDAZIONE SOZZANI MILAN**

OPENING RECEPTION:

**VIA ENRICO TAZZOLI 3, MILANO - 20154 ITALY**



Photo by Julien Martinez Leclerc

**'Bronze 01', 2025**

Outside: Black, Inside: Pink Yarrow  
H. 50 x L. 65 x W. 65 cm

On the occasion of the Salone del Mobile, Laffanour | Galerie Downtown is exhibiting for the first time in Milan, at the Fondazione Sozzani, Nectar Vessels Bronzes, a series of bronze vase-sculptures designed by Kris Van Assche. Initially unveiled in Paris, the project acquires a new conceptual dimension in Milan thanks to a **special collaboration with the Fondazione Sozzani**.

Conceived as *"a moment suspended in time"*, the installation offers a **pause, a contemplative interlude in the frantic rhythm of the Salone del Mobile**.

This presentation extends a dialogue initiated with François Laffanour in 2017 around Isamu Noguchi's famous Akari lamps, revisited on the occasion of the launch of Dior Homme's Black Carpet collection, then another collaboration around 17 pieces of Pierre Jeanneret's furniture in 2019 with Berluti, as well as a first exhibition "Nectar Vessels Bronzes" presented in Paris in June 2025.

Nectar Vessels Bronzes is born from a reflection on time, materiality and the autonomy of objects. These works are not just functional vessels waiting for ornamentation, but complete sculptural presences in themselves: *"I started to realize that the vases were the flowers themselves," says Kris Van Assche, "The vases don't need anything. The outside of the bronze becomes the petal, the opening suggests nectar inside. When you approach it, you are naturally invited to look inside, as you would with a flower. »*

Composed of 14 pieces (7 shapes each available in two colors) and issued in 8 pieces, this series explores the paradox between raw material and the apparent delicacy that emanates from each creation. This unique project is the result of two years of exchanges between the designer and François Laffanour, who gave him carte blanche. The choice of bronze, proposed by François, opened up a new field of exploration for Kris Van Assche.

Each piece, **made of bronze according to a meticulous artisanal process**, explores the tension between external restraint and inner revelation. The outer surface is matte, mineral, almost monolithic, while the interior, polished and luminous, captures and reflects the light with precious intensity. Chromatic and textural contrasts accentuate depth and invite an intimate contemplative experience. The collection was created in collaboration with the Fodor Foundry in Port-sur-Saône. Far from his usual material, Kris Van Assche approached bronze with the same method as for his fashion collections: working alongside the craftsmen, listening to the gesture, respecting the process.

Photo by Jeremy Barniaud



**'Bronze 01', 2025**

Outside: Black, Inside: Pink Yarrow  
H. 50 x L. 65 x W. 65 cm

The formal language of the work is both architectural and organic. The openings are carefully calibrated; angles, thicknesses and proportions are developed with the precision of garment making. Kris Van Assche's creative methodology in this project remains anchored in the universe in which he has always evolved: fashion and craftsmanship.

From sketching to proportional adjustments and continuous refinement of volumes, the process remains close to that of clothing. "I approached bronze as I would approach sewing," he explains. "Correcting the silhouette, adjusting the opening, working on balance: it's the same discipline, transposed into another material." Bold and experimental, this exhibition shakes up the codes of bronze and invites you to a sensory and symbolic immersion. Kris Van Assche signs here a series where design becomes sculpture, evoking both floral fragility and artisanal power.

**For this presentation in Milan, the idea of suspension is transformed into a new environmental interpretation.** If the Parisian exhibition evoked an abstract forest during Milan Fashion Week, the installation becomes a "pink haven", a kind of surrealist oasis in the heart of the Salone. An island covered with a pink carpet partially covers the floor and envelops the exhibition plinths, creating a unified landscape in which the vases emerge as silent, contemplative forms. The atmosphere suggests an imaginary garden, both abstract and poetic, reinforcing the notion of pause and tranquility. **Subtle atmospheric interventions, smoke or vaporous elements, extend the idea of suspension and amplify the immersive dimension of the project.**

The exhibition also features a new series of black-and-white photographs by **Julien Martinez Leclerc**, highlighting the sculptural intensity and material depth of the works, while highlighting the tactile and volumetric qualities of bronze.



**'Bronze 08', 2025**

Outside: Red Chrysanthemum

Inside: Blue Corydalis

H: 57.8 x L: 60 x W: 60 cm



Photo by Jeremy Barniaud

'Bronze 01, 05, 06, 11, 12'  
2025

Various colours and sizes.

For **Federico Poletti, Exhibition Coordinator of the project**, the timing of the Milan presentation is particularly significant: *"Presenting Nectar Vessels during the Salone del Mobile is not only symbolically powerful, but culturally relevant. This is the week when Milan reflects on the future of design. Kris Van Assche's work reminds us that contemporary design must also rediscover time, craftsmanship, and material integrity. These bronzes celebrate artisanal knowledge while speaking a distinctly contemporary language."*

**Sara Sozzani Maino, Creative Director of Sozzani Foundation**, comments: "In today's accelerated creative system, taking time is a powerful and necessary choice. For Fondazione Sozzani, it is particularly significant to present Nectar Vessels during the Salone del Mobile, as the project embodies a vision where patience, craftsmanship, and contemporary thinking converge. Kris Van Assche approaches bronze with the precision of couture and the sensitivity of a sculptor, creating works that honor artisanal excellence while expressing a distinctly modern language."

The project resonates deeply within the context of Milan Design Week, where questions of scale, industrial production, and innovation dominate discourse. In contrast, Nectar Vessels proposes a slower rhythm and a renewed dialogue with craftsmanship. *"I have been incredibly fortunate in my career," Van Assche reflects. "After years dedicated to large fashion houses, I wanted to experience time differently. Working on these bronzes allowed me to develop something patiently, with respect for the artisans and for the material. It is another form of luxury – one rooted in attention and care."*

With Nectar Vessels, Kris Van Assche expands his creative trajectory beyond fashion, affirming a vision of contemporary craftsmanship where material research, conceptual clarity, and sensory experience converge. The Milan presentation marks a pivotal moment in this evolving dialogue between fashion, sculpture, and collectible design.

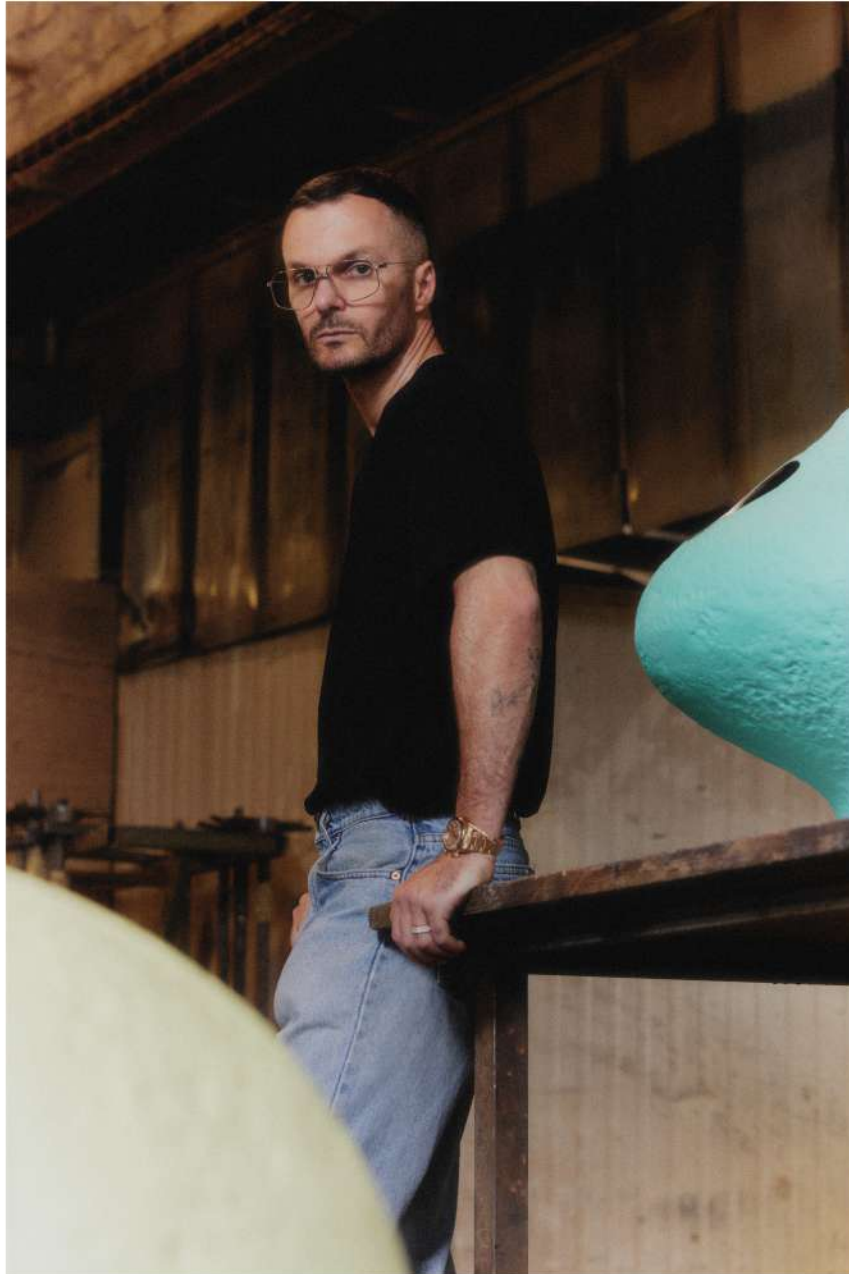


Photo by Jeremy Barniaud

### About Kris Van Assche

Kris Van Assche (born 12 May 1976 in Londerzeel) is a Belgian fashion designer. A graduate of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, he began his career at Yves Saint Laurent, then at Dior Homme alongside Hedi Slimane. In 2004, he founded his own brand **KRISVANASSCHE**, through which he developed a minimalist and contemporary aesthetic. In 2007, he was appointed artistic director of **Dior Homme**, a position he held for more than ten years, where he evolved the men's silhouette towards a more formal elegance, mixing tailoring rigor and more "streetwear" influences.

In 2018, Kris Van Assche was appointed artistic director of the house of **Berluti**, where he continues his exploration of a sophisticated and modern men's wardrobe. In parallel to his work as a creator, he develops an artistic practice presented in several exhibitions and regularly collaborates with brands and cultural institutions. Known for his sleek and architectural approach to clothing, he has established himself as one of the major figures in contemporary men's design.

## About Laffanour | Galerie Downtown Paris

Founded by François Laffanour, Laffanour Galerie Downtown Paris is internationally recognized as one of the leading galleries dedicated to 20th- and 21st-century collectible design. Located in the historic Saint-Germain-des-Prés district, the gallery has built a reputation for its rigorous curatorial vision and its commitment to presenting museum-quality design within a contemporary art context. Initially renowned for its expertise in French modernist masters – including figures such as Jean Prouvé, Charlotte Perriand, and Pierre Jeanneret – the gallery has progressively expanded its scope to embrace contemporary creators whose work engages in dialogue with craftsmanship, material research, and architectural form.

Laffanour Galerie Downtown Paris participates in major international art and design fairs, positioning collectible design at the intersection of fine art, architecture, and functional sculpture. Its program emphasizes limited editions, historically significant works, and new commissions that reinterpret artisanal traditions through a contemporary lens. By collaborating with designers such as Kris Van Assche, the gallery reaffirms its role as a platform where fashion, art, and collectible design converge. The presentation of Nectar Vessels in Milan underscores Laffanour's commitment to supporting projects that explore material depth, conceptual rigor, and the evolving language of contemporary craftsmanship.

François Laffanour © DePasquale+Maffini

