

ArchiPanic

Architecture & Design BlogZine

THE 'FUTURE RELICS' EXHIBITION REIMAGINES RENAISSANCE ARTEFACTS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

For the 'Future Relics' exhibition, Galerie Philia tasked six international designers with reinterpreting Florence's rich cultural legacy under the rule of the Medici.

🗨 NOVEMBER 25, 2024

ANDRÉS PONNER ART COLLECTIBLE DESIGN ELSA FOULON FLORENCE GALERIE PHILIA
ITALY RAII STUDIO LAURA PASQUINO MORRISON STUDIO PIERRE DE VALCK RENAISSANCE
SHIFTING VISION



'Future Relics' exhibition by Galerie Philia and Shifting Vision in Florence – All photos by Studio Brinth, courtesy of Galerie Philia.

Design. The *Future Relics* expression is an oxymoron. A relic bears the weight of a bygone era. Thus, projecting a symbol of the past to our time's vision for tomorrow is an ambitious challenge, especially if you are commissioned to reimagine one of humanity's most illuminated eras: the Italian Renaissance. **Galerie Philia**, art production firm **Shifting Vision**, and **The Medici Archive Project** tasked six international designers for a research-led exhibition in the conservatory of the stunning 16th-century *Palazzo Corsini al Prato* in the heart of Florence, Italy.

Φ PHILIA



The designers travelled to Florence and delved into the Medici family's vast archival holdings and legacy. Collaborating with researchers and academics specialised in Renaissance studies, they examined the local craftsmanship and diverse techniques of the time to create *"unique pieces that resonate both locally and globally, symbolically and conceptually."*



Italian design duo **Morghen Studio** created a floor lamp with a brass structure that pays tribute to the *Gates of Paradise*, the gilded door of the Baptistery of San Giovanni in Florence. Marble elements refer to Michelangelo's *Pietà*. The design is a take on the classic column, a fundamental element adopted by the Florentine Renaissance from classical antiquity.



Belgian designer **Pierre de Valck**, inspired by a Medici chest he discovered at the Palazzo Pitti, created a wedding casket in patinated bronze with a lock made of meteorite rock. The work references the gifts exchanged on significant social occasions during the Medici period and how these objects strengthened social ties and cross-cultural alliances at the time.



Pierre de Valck's wedding bronze casket.

Kar Studio, from Guangzhou, China, conceived a conceptual chair inspired by the throne of Cosimo de Medici. The high-backed seat nods to the thrones of another illuminated dynasty, the Ming. The translucent fibreglass design is adorned with Chinese jade, alluding to the four classical elements found in Renaissance iconography and Chinese philosophy.

Φ PHILIA



Inspired by Italian Renaissance reliquaries containing the holy remains of saints, French ceramicist **Elsa Foulon** created a sculptural 'Relic of the Future' made with wood and ceramic doors inlaid with pyrite nuggets. The cabinet explores the concept of a relic and contemporary perspectives on what we choose to protect today.



Elsa Foulon's 'Relic of the Future' reliquary.

Φ PHILIA

Amsterdam-based ceramicist **Laura Pasquino** presented a series of sculptural pieces directly influenced by the Medici porcelain formula, found in archives detailing Francesco I de Medici's 1560s ceramic workshop, which aimed to imitate Chinese porcelain.



Laura Pasquino's 'Future Relics' China vessels.

Intrigued by the art and cultures of the recently discovered New World, the Medici collected Aztec and Pre-Colombian artefacts. From these, Mexican designer **Andrés Monnier** created an intricate altar comprising a mask made of Mexican stone with black obsidian eyes. The one-of-a-kind piece was damaged in transport and couldn't be included in the show.

Φ PHILIA



From left: pieces by Kar Studio and Pierre de Valck.

Φ PHILIA

All photos of the 'Future Relics' exhibition are by Studio Brinth, courtesy of Galerie Philia.



'Future Relics' exhibition by Galerie Philia and Shifting Vision in Florence.