

TWENTY FIRST

COLLECTIBLE DESIGN OF THE CENTURY

Mon – Thurs 10am – 6pm
Friday 10am – 5pm

76 Franklin Street
New York, NY, 10013



NATHALIE ZIEGLER
FRAGMENTED FANTASIES
OPENING | SEPTEMBER 28, 2023

Scarabée Hanging Chandelier, 2023
Blown Glass, Copper Silvering
Brass and Copper Structure
24 Lights, H 35.43 x D 33.47 in. (H 90 x D 85 cm)

Twenty First is pleased to present *Fragmented Fantasies*, a solo exhibition of iconoclastic glass works from French artist Nathalie Ziegler premiering September 28, 2023. On the occasion of the show's debut, *please join us in the company of the artist at the opening reception between 6—8pm on Thursday, September 28th.*

With the rhythm of a dancer and the brilliance of an astute artisan, Ziegler's practice is an expressive exercise in gravity, intricacy, and anti-expectation. Finding balance in poetic sculpture and contemporary function, Ziegler's pieces are practical objects like mirrors, vessels, and chandeliers that through some artful miracle have metamorphosed into

otherworldly works of sculpture. It's through this evolution of observation that her decor prompts viewers to question the modern standard and to expand their imagination into a world where the scales of a snake are made from gilded tiles of Verrerie Saint-Just glass.

This exhibition is a manifesto of light and beauty at the hands of a masterly alchemist. As fluid and bewildering as her work, the pieces presented in this collection are ones outside of explanation or simplistic reasoning. Each piece is entirely bespoke and doused in ethereal excellence. "This is not an exhibition of decorative design, it's a world of its own," says Renaud Vuailat, founder of Twenty First

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ABOUT THE WORK

Ziegler's work is uniquely embedded in the history of French craftsmanship, drawn from centuries-old traditions and painstaking process. The glass used in her pieces is produced by Verrerie de Saint-Just, the famed manufacturer established in 1826 by royal decree of Charles X, which created the glass for projects by many highly-esteemed artists including Marc Chagall, Henri Matisse, and Fernand Léger. Ziegler's artful, one of a kind lighting sculptures catch the eye, dance with light and illuminate the spaces they inhabit. Silvered and sandblasted glass pieces are cut and assembled to refract and propagate light into subtle ornamental and ethereal visions. To achieve these stunning effects, Ziegler works with several other traditional French houses: Egrise et Millon in Pantin, which performs manual silvering and sandblasting of Saint Just glasses; Les Ateliers Marcotte, the last remaining bronzers in Paris skilled in the art of made to measure, lathe-cut suspension structures; and Lorraine-based Mad Verrerie D'Art, the glass art workshop responsible for creating delicate glass cones to cover the bulbs within her sculptures.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

A French artist, former Prima Ballerina, and the daughter of an aeronautical engineer, Nathalie Ziegler's boundless design practice is as bewildering as it is kaleidoscopic. A skillful sculptor and ingenious engineer, her works exist in an opulent realm of glass and traditional craftsmanship. From her aesthetic perspective, nature reverberates in technicolor with works that defy gravity and refract light like glass cranes soaring through a saturated sky.

Ziegler's work has been exhibited internationally in Italy, New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco, London, Bangkok, and Hong Kong. In France, her work has appeared at

numerous locations including Printemps du Lux at the Museum of Decorative Arts, PAD Paris, Hôtel de Crillon and Hôtel des Bains. Her pieces are held in numerous private collections throughout Europe, Asia, Australia, the Middle East and the US. *Autumnal Forest Chandelier* was exhibited at Salon Art + Design 2022, New York. A unique piece entitled *Rêves D'ô* was commissioned by The Mobilier National de Paris for Les Aliénés exhibition in 2022 when the museum acquired a Ziegler lamp for their collection. Ziegler's works are also featured at GRAFF in New York and Hong Kong, Tiffany's in New York and Monaco. In 2024, there will be an outdoor installation of her works for the Matta Archives Foundation in Italy.

A CONSIDERED PERSPECTIVE

Fleury, Cynthia. *A Fleur D'eau*, 2023

In my thesis (1996-2000), I discovered two large metaphysical birds, inseparable from the concepts of philosophy and mythology, in the recesses of the imaginal, very close to the poetry that educates the mind: Bachelard's Phoenix (20th century), and Farīd ad-Dīn 'Aṭṭār's Simorgh (12th century); birds that spoke the truth of the soul, the pain of the heart, the melancholy of lives, the metamorphic obligation to navigate this world and free oneself from material prisons. And at the same time, I could see them emerging, revealing themselves in Nathalie Ziegler's work. They were not then explicitly presented as "birds", but the shape of their plumage and the variety of their chromatic ranges could be discerned in the ornamentation of chandeliers, and here again I found the flame theme so dear to Bachelard.

Nathalie Ziegler is a metamorphic bird of fire and water. It was only natural that she should activate the power of glass, its sharpness and light, its delicacy and opulence, to express the trials and tribulations of life and the journey towards creation and self- acceptance. The snake motif came later, after even more complicated personal episodes, to

express the tireless need to heal oneself of ills. For my part, I saw it as an invocation of the staff of Asclepius, around which it entwines, to symbolize healing.

Ziegler's bestiary is hybrid, linking animals and the elements: birds, dragons and snakes, all from fire and water. It links the real world with the invisible, mythological world. It links spiritual and psychological archetypes with the most contemporary design possible. With its glass flowers, flora and fauna converse with each other: is it a sea anemone? Is it a rhododendron? Or is it a cloud that has captured the colors of a rainbow?

She is now a glass sculptor and engineer of curves and ridges, she works in the air, creating enchanting, terribly technical "suspensions", where everything holds together because flexibility is the link. Touch Ziegler's works, and everything vibrates,

moves, shakes, dances; nothing is rigid so that nothing breaks. They're like a human body, when caressed both wounded and wounding but not breaking. Both languid and tonic. Now is the time to take flight. More than twenty years after the first elaborations, and a solid track record with major gallerists and collectors, it was time to grasp Ziegler's mono-icographic narrative in a single gesture and understand how her pieces would endure in the fluid hereafter and tell us dreams of the future and eternal times.

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WORKS

CATALOG

