Matisse cut-outs inspire this lighting collection by Formafantasma

At Milan Design Week 2022, Maison Matisse celebrates the French artist’s paper cut-outs through contemporary design collections.

Henri Matisse began working on paper cut-outs in 1941, and continued until his death in 1954, creating compositions using gouache painted paper, cut with scissors and pinned to studio walls to create the artworks, which featured anthropomorphic figures, foliage, and abstract signs. ‘The Fold’ collection by Formafantasma references these cut-outs, through the use of metal and paper shapes cut and assembled in the same way.

In the spirit of Henri Matisse, Maison Matisse celebrates joie de vivre; a heritage of optimism combines with those of perseverance, audacity, simplicity and family to envision heirloom-worthy objects, says Jean-Matthieu Matisse, the painter’s great-grandson and founder of the brand. ‘These are pieces that harness artisanal craftsmanship to gather value, history and design to bring joy to both present and future generations to come.’

‘The Fold’ collection interprets this modern art heritage and marks Maison Matisse’s first foray into design. Designers Andrea Trimarchi and Simone Farresin were inspired by the artist’s process, and like Matisse, they used a ruler and blade to shape the silhouettes of chandeliers, table lamps, candleholders and pendant lights. With simple geometric shapes, the designers have created a series of abstract compositions that subtly reference the artist’s creative style, while maintaining Formafantasma’s unique, sophisticated approach. Made of machine-cut and bent steel, spray-painted to a smooth finish in shades from moss green to deep red, pink and blue (each piece is available in the four colours), the lamps feature contrasting white paper shades.

Says Jean-Matthieu Matisse, ‘Ours is a family that counts the finest designers and craftsmen to create forever pieces that make a house a home and inspire optimism: the Maison Matisse state of mind.’

The lamps inspired by Matisse cut-outs on view at 5 Vie, Milan. Photography: Delfiino Sisto Legnani e Piercarlo Quecchia