

Wall Rupture

French designer Thierry Dreyfus' latest light installation aims to transform space without taking up any room in its surroundings

Paris-based artist Thierry Dreyfus does not design lighting so much as sculpt it. He has flooded vast spaces from catwalk shows to Paris' Grand Palais and Notre Dame Cathedral with his textured, emotion-laden displays, and while his latest piece for Flos is on a smaller scale, his intent is the same.

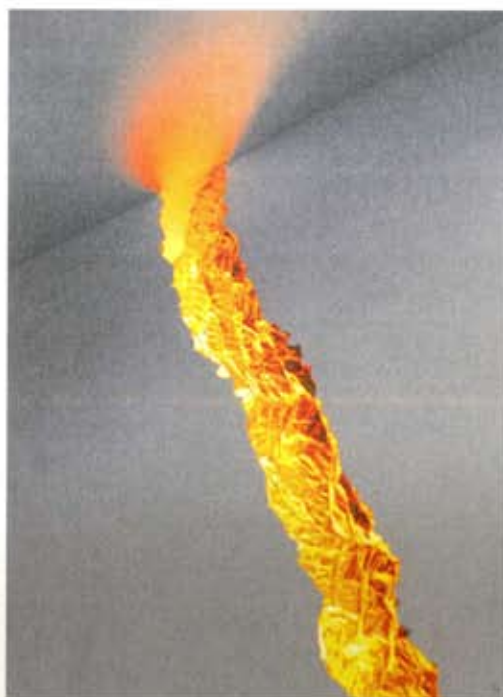
Installed at the Atrium showroom for London Design Festival, Wall Rupture appears as a jagged, golden crack in the wall, torn from floor to ceiling, which Dreyfus hopes will transform a space without taking up any room at all. "I wish to lead people to a moment of absence," he explains, "a disconnected moment when one just looks and smiles; a simple, quiet moment robbed from the urban speed. The speed of light can offer a slowing down – the texture of the light itself reflecting on the gold leaves offers a tone that inspires calm instinctively."

When it was first exhibited at Euroluce in Milan in April, Dreyfus watched with satisfaction as hundreds of people stopped and stared. "They try to look inside, they feel the warmth of the light and let go of themselves without questioning the light source. I think they all react to the feeling that something exists inside the walls, some kind of beauty. I'm always looking for a way to infuse a feeling of weightlessness, not to impose any message but to create an empty space inside which one finds one's own way." He is now working with Flos on an even more minimalist lighting project: "How we could create a lamp that no one would see, the opposite or absence of a shape in a way."

Wall Rupture is an echo of the golden seam down the middle of last year's "Homage" table, originally inspired by the slashed canvases of Argentine painter and sculptor Lucio Fontana. "I was questioning the essence of man and the golden scar inside each one of us that never heals, but gives us a drive to live."

The piece uses concealed LED light sources, a technology towards which Dreyfus admits he has mixed feelings. Their price, long life and cool temperature is attractive, but he's less fond of the tones they often produce. Wall Rupture uses Flos' 2800°K light temperature LEDs, which is equivalent to candlelight. "That is the best tone to enhance the complexion, but when I looked into it, LEDs are mostly green. I hate the multicolour effects of LED-driven installations that change from red to blue to green. They look so gimmicky!" Neither will he lose his affection for traditional bulbs: "A light bulb with a real filament, like a candle, will never be replaced. They are altogether a truly emotional and iconic object."

WORDS:
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Left
Wall Rupture
is made of
concealed
LED sources

Below
The light
reaches
from floor
to ceiling

