galerie 8+4 éditions d'art



François Azambourg, *Bois fendu*, dessin, 2015.

# FRANÇOIS
# OBJETS DÉROBÉS
# AZAMBOURG

**20 JUIN – 19 SEPTEMBRE 2026**

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**Paris Design Week** Maison &Objet

Galerie 8+4
13, rue d'Alexandrie
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# FRANCOIS AZAMBOURG
# *OBJETS DÉROBÉS*

**Exhibition at Galerie 8+4**
**20 June – 19 September 2026**

***In partnership with Paris Design Week***

An artist's studio stands as a labyrinth of memory and, in this particular case, as a realm of wonder. It is here that treasures plucked from the imagination are revealed; it is here, too, that sketches, untapped discoveries, uncertain prototypes, experimental or rejected objects, and resounding successes lie hidden. For François Azambourg, the studio also takes the form of a journey through his practice since the mid-1980s. It is with this desire to transport the enchanting and magical spirit of his Breton studio in Douarnenez to another place that Galerie 8 + 4 presents 'Objets dérobés', a vast exhibition and exploration of François Azambourg's previously unseen creations.

"Objets dérobés" aims to reveal the secret springs of this poet-inventor and to celebrate the experimentation that finds its source in the silence of the studio. All the objects gathered here embody that famous 'suspended step' described by certain Japanese writers, as if to better characterise these extraordinary works—works fertilised as much by the rigour of discipline as by the exuberance of childhood's mischievous impulses and wildest dreams. A realm of childhood that never ceases to guide and nourish the entirety of François Azambourg's output.

This exhibition notably features rarely seen works, such as this exceptional split-wood furniture of unparalleled technical skill, achieved through a simple, ancestral technique straight from Japanese craftsmen; fibre-optic lamps; mobiles and static installations, some composed solely of leaves, propeller fans, a few drawings and paintings, and even a series of objects made from wood shavings—braided, assembled or woven with absolute lightness, such as this screen, a true masterpiece of poetic engineering, known only to a select few friends.

In contrast, a few landmark pieces – the Very Nice chair, the Douglas glass vase and the Spoutnik lamp – punctuate the display. By 'landmark pieces', we mean those products that have made his name in the world of design. But here, they appear in their earliest, almost primitive form: that of a prototype that is inevitably unique, inevitably rich with the trials and experiments that led to its conception, springing from his flashes of imagination. Even before being the sum of the artist's manual labour, every prototype remains, above all, the living trace of a burst of inspiration and the emergence of an idea that the hand subsequently attempts to give form to.

In this sense, 'Objets dérobés' should be seen as a journey through this designer's iconoclastic imagination, taking the form, within the spaces of Galerie 8 + 4, of an immersive and intimate experience, enhanced by an airy and ethereal scenography that highlights the simplicity of the means and materials employed. As for these objects, originally intended for the designer's secret archives, they range from the most imposing to the most delicate, true odes to lightness—that of ideas and forms—much to the delight of enthusiasts and collectors.

**An extraordinary designer**

François Azambourg stands out for his relationship with materials, which involves manipulating them and putting them to the test through the action of his hands, always grappling with technical challenges. To experiment is to undo, redo, bend, twist, straighten, pierce, sand, juxtapose, glue, perforate, tear, put to the test... in short, engaging in a dialogue with the material, its possible forms, its resistance, its weight, playing on its physical qualities whilst magnifying its flaws. Not a struggle between man and matter, but rather a game with the imagination acting as referee. Wood, glass, metal, paper, clay, leather, stone, but also branches or leaves found in nature present themselves as fields in which one might lose one's way and thus deconstruct habits. François Azambourg also, and above all, loves the 'failures', the false mistakes that ultimately reveal surprising and unprecedented possibilities. His creations can therefore take the most diverse paths. They may spring from a drawing, stem from one of the sketches that fill the sketchbooks he never parts with, or arise from the material itself. But whatever their origin, each of his creations remains a vibrant tribute to the materials that make up the world and the way in which humankind can re-enchant them.





*Studio, Douarnenez, 2025*



***Wood shavings…***

*“In the workshops of Yamamoto Kogyo, I was struck by the extraordinary delicacy of the shavings produced by their machines […]. A shaving is a thin layer of wood torn from the timber. In English, ‘shaving wood’ is self-explanatory. I made the first samples by trying to repair the shavings with gold-coloured tape in the spirit of kintsugi. I made other assemblages of shavings by gluing them with rice glue, kakishibu or using other bonding methods; by stapling, by knotting… I also glued the shavings by rolling them up on themselves so that the resulting object resembles a slice of tree. »*

*“This shift from the discarded to the usable came about naturally, as my work focuses on humble materials and the economy of materials.”*







***The Split Wood Collection…***

*“How can one produce a wooden object without creating dusty sawdust, which is harmful to the worker? It turns out that a tool—the wedge—which forms a V-shaped cut, produces neither sawdust nor shavings. It splits and separates the wood into planks known as shingles, staves or boards. My imagination is drawn to old tools when compared with modern ones. The wedge was invented long before the saw, probably in the Lower Palaeolithic in its stone form. […] The saw damages the fibres by shredding them, which weakens the wood and causes it to lose its natural waterproofing. Splitting wood, on the other hand, does not damage the wood and preserves its intrinsic qualities by creating planks of great aesthetic appeal, which are light and watertight. This was the starting point for the Japanese experiment at Villa Kujoyama: to produce a raw design without creating dust.”*



***Very Nice Chair***

*« The Very Nice Chair had been on my mind for a while. Then, one day during a break, I took the plunge and made a scale model inspired by the geodesic lattice structure of aeroplane wings. It reminded me of the balsa wood aeroplane models from my childhood. Like an aeroplane wing, I covered it with a red film, a colour that symbolises vitality and joy to me. Ultimately, the structure becomes the setting and the setting becomes the structure. Curiously, this chair liberated my approach to design, which until then had relied primarily on technical skill. I was 39 years old and, ever since, my work has been suspended in a floating world, between intersecting technicalities, childhood dreams, art and the play of colours. ”*



***Leaf mobiles***

*“My daughter was born in the autumn of 1994. I collected some plane tree leaves and made a mobile out of them to liven up the dull ceiling of her bedroom. There were plenty of mobiles available in shops, but I didn’t like them; I thought they were ugly. Ever since that autumn gathering, I’ve enjoyed making mobiles using simple materials that respond to the draughts. There’s something childlike about the mobile that continues to captivate and amuse me.”*



***Douglas Fir Vase with the CIAV Meisenthal***

*“A glass bubble heated to 800°C is blown into a mould made of Douglas fir. The mould catches fire. The combustion of the wood, driven by the incandescent glass, shapes and imprints the vase. Cast after cast, the mould burns away and hollows out, whilst the vases expand until the mould is exhausted. I found it interesting to produce pieces that are all different using the same process.”*

**François Azambourg**



Born in 1963, François Azambourg established himself in the mid-1980s as one of the key figures in French design. Trained at the École nationale supérieure des arts appliqués et des métiers d'art, he soon began collaborating with the CIAV, the Sèvres porcelain factory, Louis Vuitton, Hermès, Cappellini, Ligne Roset, the Kréo gallery and others... His iconoclastic view of the world of design also saw him win the Musée des Arts Décoratifs competition in 1985, the Fondation de France award in 1988, the Villa Médicis hors les murs in 2003, the City of Paris Grand Prix du Design in 2004 and, finally, the Villa Kujoyama in 2015. Conceived as the crowning achievement of a distinguished career, the MAD (Musée des Arts Décoratifs) in Paris is dedicating a major retrospective to him in 2023, bringing together over 200 pieces, for which he is creating a remarkable exhibition design based on eco-friendly principles.

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