



HERVÉ WAHLEN

modern shapes gallery





CATALOG

**HERVÉ WAHLEN**

## ARTISTIC APPROACH

Wahlen's initiation to metalsmithing materialized through *dinanderie*, a traditional copper-working technique perfected by medieval artisans in the Belgian manufacturing town of Dinant. The technique involves hammering, firing, and shaping a sheet of copper into a fluid three-dimensional object: a cauldron, a kettle, a pot. Wahlen then immersed himself in an ongoing exploration of labor-intensive metalcrafts. His decades-long study of the different metalsmithing techniques and strenuous aspiration for craftsmanship mastery led the earnest artist back to *dinanderie* and brought his work into the realm of fine art with exhibitions in galleries and museums around the world, including Barry Friedman, Ltd. in New York and the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain in Paris. The result is an array of illusive organic forms with highly tactile skins patinated and buffed with beeswax. His pieces create a cohesive ensemble of

works of elegant simplicity that combine a feminine sensuality through lissome forms and a masculine presence through weight and materiality. Often, their dark-skinned bodies open up to reveal an intricately hammered interior gilded in gold leaf. Also part of Wahlen's artistic vocabulary is the rare, gravity-defying positions that the sculptor achieves through curvature and weight. This sense of balance resonates throughout the artist's versatile sculptures, which embody an elegant equilibrium between art and craft, interior and exterior, concealment and revelation, lightness and substance. Or as Wahlen states, between "my wisdom and my folly, my dreams and reality."

***Untitled, 2023***

hammered gilded copper

17 x 20 x 20 cm

6.69 x 7.87 x 7.87 inch

€ 3.800,-





***Untitled, 2023***

hammered gilded copper

40 x 12 x 10 cm

15.75 x 4.72 x 3.94 inch

€ 3.800,-



***Untitled, 2023***

hammered gilded copper

23 x 18 x 14 cm

9.05 x 7.09 x 5.51 inch

SOLD



***Untitled, 2023***

hammered gilded copper

30 x 17 x 17 cm

11.81 x 6.69 x 6.69 inch

€ 3.800,-



HERVÉ WAHLEN (B. 1957, DZ)

Born in Oran, Algeria in 1957, Paris-based sculptor Hervé Wahlen traces the impetus for his lifelong exploration of forms and metalsmithing techniques back to his first contact with copper in 1981. The self-taught master of engraving and hammering techniques has since built a significant body of work embodying his emotional response to the metal's tactility. "I was immediately drawn to the material, to touch and handle the substance in my hands. I constantly attempt to transfer this emotion by creating sculptures that invite direct contact" describes the artist.





