numena

art, furniture & objets

“F A T U M”

door knocker.

Santos Bregaña & Javier Zunda.

Whoever enters the home of a poet
Does not know that the furniture has power over him
That each knot of wood holds
More birdcalls than all the woodland heart
And that it is enough that a lamp curves its womanly neck
Against a polished corner as evening falls
To suddenly let loose a thousand cities of bees
And the smell of fresh bread from the cherry trees in flower
Because such is the happiness of this solitude
That one tender brush of the hand brings back
To these great dark taciturn chairs and tables
The lightness of a tree in the morning.

René-Guy Cadou

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Why Numena
Its name refers to the Latin numen, the protective deity of humans and places from the animist tradition, and a term also used to express the idea of the magical power that resides in an object, endowed by nature. This project arose out of a desire to produce functional metal objects with a soul, as can only be done in the artisan tradition.

Where
Eibar, Gipuzkoa. This town set in the bottom of a valley has a treasure: its metal workshops. If in ancient times it produced the best shotguns – and it still does – later they put that ingenuity to use by manufacturing bicycles that are famous all over Europe, as well as best-selling sewing machines. They also went into fields such as nanotechnology and producing metal work for internationally renowned artists. The latest adventure in the forges here is Numena.

Process
Numena furniture and objets are the product of a happy marriage between high technology and deep-rooted metallurgical craftsmanship. In essence it is an introspective hunt, where a line drawing captures a fleeting dream. Months of intense work will pass between that first outline and the final piece. In some cases the work will be produced by casting, in others by folding, and often many techniques will be brought together to make one piece. The most complex projects arise from a geometrical challenge; maths and digital programming may be the tools needed to make them possible, or maybe only the craftsman's handiwork, without the intervention of any complex calculation.

Material and finishes
In Numena, Hephaestus is venerated as the main god, and all metals are worthy of devotion. Classic bronze is worked alongside steel, aluminium or brass. When necessary, other materials such as stone, glass and leather are added, as well as different finishes – milling, acid etching, etc. – and patinas and polishing with both traditional and experimental treatments, based on profound metallurgical know-how.

The formula
Numena is also an alchemy that brings together apparent contrasts: art and craft, ornament and minimalism, market and poetry, physicality and lightness, dream and presence, well-being and mental challenge.

“F A T U M” door knocker.

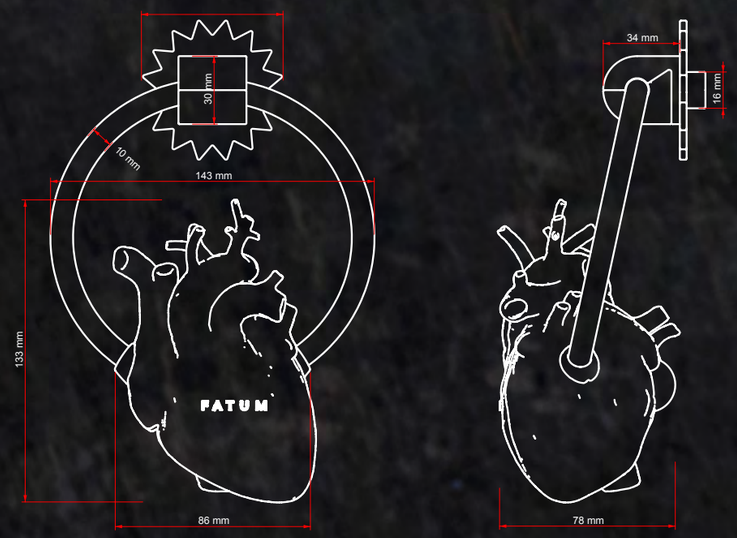
Santos Bregaña & Javier Zunda.
14,3 cm. x 22,0 cm. x 8,5 cm. Stainless steel.

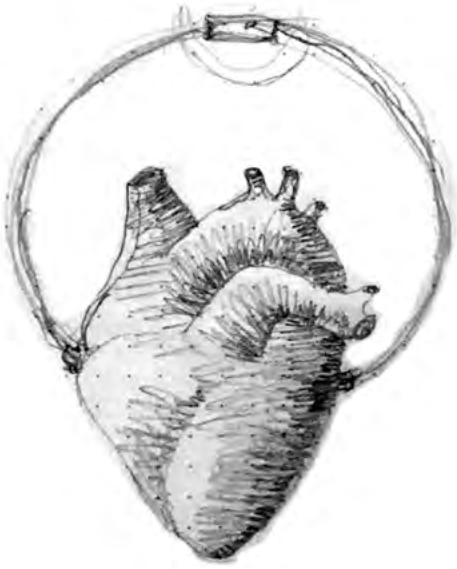
Originally, bronze or iron door knockers were made in the shape of a hoop or a ring. Who knows their origin? Design is for solving a problem, but the natural selection of animals and objects often causes unexpected transformations. Perhaps something intended for tying up a horse ended up serving as a knocker. We must also remember that an empty circle was the symbol of asylum. According to tradition, at the foundation of Rome Romulus built an *asylum* in the city, a place to welcome anyone who wanted to settle in the new city, and the *asylum* was an inviolable place. In the Middle Ages, churches and other places such as cemeteries and convents displayed an iron ring to indicate a place where a person accused of a crime could take refuge from the mob or the implacable justice of the powerful. If you touched the knocker with your hand you were safe from punishment. The simple ring is often a snake biting its tail, an emblem of eternal return, of circular time. Not for nothing do time and temple have a common etymology; at the blows of the door knocker, time stands still.

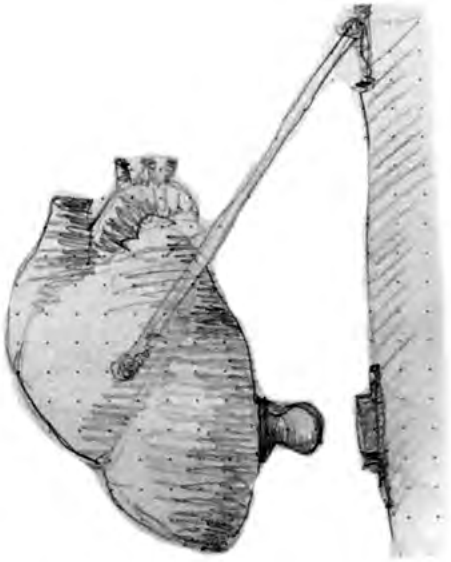
Throughout history there have been a thousand forms of door knocker, traditionally the shape of a hand holding an apple. This is the hand of Eve reminding the visitor that they are a sinner. It is the apple from the tree of paradise, and its bearer is asking to be let in to the mortal world.

Systole and diastole; the contraction and dilation of the heart that thuds at the door, asking for asylum. On this occasion, asylum from an exile in which we all seem to participate, from a weariness that drives us to return to paradise. Perhaps for this reason, this little heart beats for a return to happiness and can be placed on the inside of a door, to ask to be let out instead of in.

A longed-for destination, to escape from time, to leave the temple. FATUM







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