

Studio Job

Studio Job is a ground-breaking atelier based in the Netherlands, Belgium and Italy and celebrated for its fusion of historical techniques and contemporary themes. Led by Job Smeets, a pioneer of contemporary sculptural art and design, the studio focuses on decorative arts for the contemporary age, producing objects and interiors that exist somewhere between sculptural and functional art.

Born in Belgium, Smeets is known for defying convention, seamlessly blending art, design and craftsmanship into radical, highly detailed creations. Known for monumental bronze sculpture, the artist and designer also works across marquetry, ceramics, textiles and – most recently – silver to craft his masterpieces. He founded Studio Job in 1998, where a team of highly skilled artisans use classical techniques, such as bronze casting, hand-painting and blacksmithing, rejecting modernist minimalism in favour of what Smeets calls ‘non-modernism’ – a style defined by detail, historical references and dark humour. The studio has worked with clients including Gufram, Barneys, Land Rover, Viktor & Rolf, Mika, Swatch, Alessi, Moooi and Pepsi.

Smeets’ work is often described as neo-Gothic or post-Renaissance for its precious, sculptural nature and high level of ornamentation. Through one-off or limited-edition handcrafted works, Smeets sees his oeuvre as continuing a European creative tradition that was interrupted by industrial design and mass production. In both the atelier and Smeets’ own creative studio, technique, science, design and art come together in what can be described as Gesamtkunstwerk – the German aesthetic concept of a total artwork or a synthesis of different art forms into one.

Works by Studio Job have been exhibited by institutions worldwide including BOZAR, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Royal Ontario Museum, Stedelijk Museum, Swarowski Museum and Victoria and Albert Museum. The atelier’s iconic, heraldic and cartoon-like sculptures are prized by collectors worldwide and can be found in institutional collections including Design Museum, Guggenheim, High Museum, Indianapolis Museum of Art, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Museum of Glass, Museum of Modern Art, Noordbrabants Museum and Rijksmuseum.

Studio Job’s pioneering practice has been recognised by numerous international accolades, including AD100, Dezeen Hot List, Elle Decor International Design Award, Wallpaper* Design Awards, Dutch Design Awards, Harrie Tillie Prize and Bombay Sapphire Designer Glass Competition. Studio Job: The Book of Job (2010, Rizzoli) was the first monograph celebrating the studio’s highly expressive work – a biblically inspired volume featuring interior spreads, specifically designed gatefold tableaux and more. Studio Job: Monkey Business (2016, Rizzoli) traces five years of the studio’s opulent, intricate and ironic creative vision, illustrating how Smeets continues to shape the cultural landscape with his provocative and collectible works.