



ROUTE-IN

Athens Design Forum presents ROUTE-IN, a site-specific outdoor installation by Tbilisi-based Rooms Studio [est. 2007] commissioned for 5VIE Design Week. Hosted in the historic Milanese SIAM 1838 Courtyard, **ROUTE-IN** is a progression of Rooms Studio's research into public space as a central axis of society.

Athens Design Forum advocates for design principles that amplify narratives interwoven with heritage and migration patterns. This collaboration crystallizes how the designers' transformation of architectural prototypes creates a lasting dialogue between time, migration, and space.

Helmed by Nata Janberidze and Ketii Toloraia, Rooms Studio's isolated benches stem from the congressional strength of ecclesiastical Orthodox prototypes. The open-ended cyclical formation of six distinct benches prompts viewers to engage with design in a targeted momentum where the public space becomes a choreographic element outlined by the audience's movement. Reflecting the boundaries present in the hierarchy of orthodox church seating arrangements, visitors are invited to refrain from physical contact with the benches. Their role as spectators prompts them to visualize in tactile form how congregation, power, and the public space intersect. At once, the essence of unity becomes embodied and enforced by design.

The pointed arch within **ROUTE-IN** is an isolated and resilient fragment from architectural structures tied to devotion – spanning across Islamic, Orthodox, Georgian, Byzantine, and Ottoman religious spaces. Its transition from the religious to the secular and from the public to the private are at the proxy of its materiality and context. Historically adopted in architectural elements that range from doors, windows, and wall openings, the pointed arch marks 'portals' across one frontier to the 'other'. Its evolution and repositioning following the 'classical' arch is imbued with the same complexity: at the core of these 'portals' is the demarcation and privatization of spaces. Over time, this heritage of forms becomes the visually identifiable culture of a city and its people.

Rooms Studio's use of hand-carved raw metal within **ROUTE-IN** allows for the pattern of the form and its repeated presence to solidify a cyclical composition. Janberidze and Toloraia reference the Anchiskhati Orthodox Church in Tbilisi, Georgia, whose pronounced pointed-arch belfry portal is of interlocking bricks. Estranged from the archetypal use of brick, the seamless result through metal marks a new monolithic series of shapes. Each piece begets its title from the seven days of the week, "Monday bench, Tuesday bench.." While the original unit and the most recognized Religious day, titled "Sunday Bench" – first premiered at Galerie Frank Elbaz in Paris, France – is absent.



Route-In Installation, Milan 2022

MONDAY BENCH (1 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W44 x L (with the curve) 45 cm
Edition: Open Edition

TUESDAY BENCH (2 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W91 x L (with the curve) 47 cm
Numbered Edition of 3 + 2 AP

WEDNESDAY BENCH (3 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W135 x L (with the curve) 51 cm
Numbered Edition of 3 + 2 AP

THURSDAY BENCH (4 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W177 x L (with the curve) 55 cm
Numbered Edition of 3 + 2 AP

FRIDAY BENCH (5 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W219 x L (with the curve) 62 cm
Numbered Edition of 3 + 2 AP

SATURDAY BENCH (6 Seat):

Material: Steel, Paint
H96 x W261 x L (with the curve) 69 cm
Numbered Edition of 3 + 2 AP







