Luminello: sustainable movement in the lighting market

Sven Algoet (48) has been designing and making lighting under the name Luminello for 8 years now. The case is the story of a boy from a small village, with big dreams to distinguish himself from the rest. And to stand out, that's what Luminello does. With its choice of durable materials and its simple, elegant style.

Sven was 14 when he got his first lamp design on. "It felt like my Edison moment. At home, I wiped everything apart with my screwdriver, experimented on it. When you finally manage to get a light on, you never forget."

How does a young teenager become entangled in electronics? "When you grow up in the small village of Gottem (Deinze), in a modest family with few prospects, you need a great passion to get ahead. And I wanted to move forward."

Climbing up the ladder

Sven spent the first 10 years of his professional career at Elektra (now Rexel), a major player in electrical equipment and lighting. And he was noticed there, as he was later snared by BTicino, an Italian manufacturer of switches and home automation, where he worked for another 10 years.

Those 20 years of experience didn't do Sven any good. He made many contacts in the sector, including Italian material manufacturers and the better lighting specialists in Belgium. "I saw my chance. I worked on my first designs for a year, started Luminello and after three months, my regular clientele was on the point".

Durable, timeless and elegant

While working in the sector, Sven also realised what he wanted to do differently. In a world in which major players are making less and less sustainable material choices, but are raising prices, he wants to be a counter-movement.

Sven therefore makes sustainable choices. He works with copper, brass and borosilicate glass (also known as Pyrex). These are raw materials that barely wear out. "You won't easily come across plastics in my studio. A luminaire by Luminello must be able to last forever."

The latter not only refers to the lifespan of the designs, but also to the style, which Sven describes as sleek, simple and elegant. "I fall under the austere country style, but my designs also fit in with industrial or vintage interiors. Each design has the typical, timeless Luminello stamp."

Relaxing in nature

So where does Sven get his inspiration? The answer is as short as it is simple: outside! "Nature is an enormous source of inspiration. It often happens that I get my best ideas while cycling or travelling. For example, the shape of the Lido collection is inspired by the wing of a seabird that I spotted at the Lido di Venezia. I imitated that curve in brass."

"I'm a hard worker, but I also have to relax enough to be creative again afterwards. I cycle a lot, in the beautiful Flemish Ardennes. And I like to travel with my wife and two children. Italy is a favourite destination, but we also look further afield with our backpacks. Indonesia was a top destination".

Short on the ball

Once the inspiration is there, the process to a finished product is quite fast, on average 3 to 4 months. "We can play ball with our small scale. I first draw out the design in pencil. Then I consult with my Italian material producers to see if the design is feasible, in terms of price, production and marketability. Out of 10 prototypes, 6 won't make it to production."

A huge waste, you might think. But at Luminello no material is lost. The prototypes are also sold in an annual warehouse sale. That is the perfect opportunity to get a completely unique piece in house.

And the house of Sven itself, which is also full of its own sustainable creations. "My home is a little bit my test room. I've already dared to make some changes to the interior. Luckily, my family loves it."