

Sunflower, the smart parasol

By Pierre Schellingen | Published the 05/24/2017 at 04:05PM



OBJECTS OF THE FUTURE - Artificial Intelligence has to go outside of our walls to bring all the technologic comfort that we can find inside of our connected homes. This is the mission of American designer Armen Gharabegian.

Armen Gharabegian is a visionary, an artist. Graduate of the prestigious Art Center College of Design in Pasadena, California, he is the founder and CEO of Ethos Design, a production company involved in the creation of exhibits and events worldwide, as well as a handcrafted furniture company, Lounge 22, based in Los Angeles. We owe him, among others, the Maximillian chair, 7 years of design and prototyping to create what is, according to him, the perfect chair. A real object of investment - the price \$25,000 - is the price of 6 weeks of work for its creation and there are only 100 available in the world.

But Armen Gharabegian doesn't want to limit himself to objects intended for the elite. If he defines himself as a designer before everything, he also wants to be an artiste of the "every day", striving to make everyday life easier. To do so, he created ShadeCraft, a start-up through which he wishes to mix design and technology.

His first product: a parasol. Or rather a display of all his knowledge in engineering, aesthetics and robotics, hidden inside an object poetically named Sunflower. We feel this name has a certain hippy Californian spirit 2.0, a sculptural dream outdoors, of technology in the open air.

Always in the shade

So, when we ask him what can we do with this object, he naturally answers that we can order a drink by speaking to it, or ask for the next hour's weather forecast. Obviously. Because to protect one from UV rays by autonomously opening itself and following the sun to always keep you in the shade is only one of its multiple functions.

Filled with sensors, the Sunflower will absorb and stock solar energy to be able to charge your tablets or smart phones as well as powering lights, microphones, a video camera and integrated speakers. It will measure the UV index and humidity level, air quality, temperature, wind and even what could prevent the proper functioning of its solar panels. It will also be able to interact with the connected objects of your house because of its Wi-Fi and Bluetooth integration.

There will be other units for professionals, in hotels for example, as well as for consumers with reduced mobility or simply in search for an object that could give them the connected comfort of their interior, outdoors.

So, if you tell yourself that solar detection is not an invention or that listening to music in your garden is not exceptional, Armen Gharabegian, who also commits himself to writing and soon cinema, will reply that to play music through a parasol is already a revolution.

Price: 2,700 euros in pre order during July

[Link to Le Figaro Article](#)