

TOGETHER

2024

The Image and Its Double

WELL-BEING

Every mirror tells a different story made of style, dimensions, and character. Each day we seek our reflected figure, which gives us a glimpse of ourselves. Choosing the right mirror is not easy. Here is our selection.

The Future of Water

WATERSTORY

The Earth is becoming increasingly arid, and blue gold is a very precious resource. Desalination of the seas is a solution adopted in many countries around the world for the production of drinking water. Let's discover where and how it works.

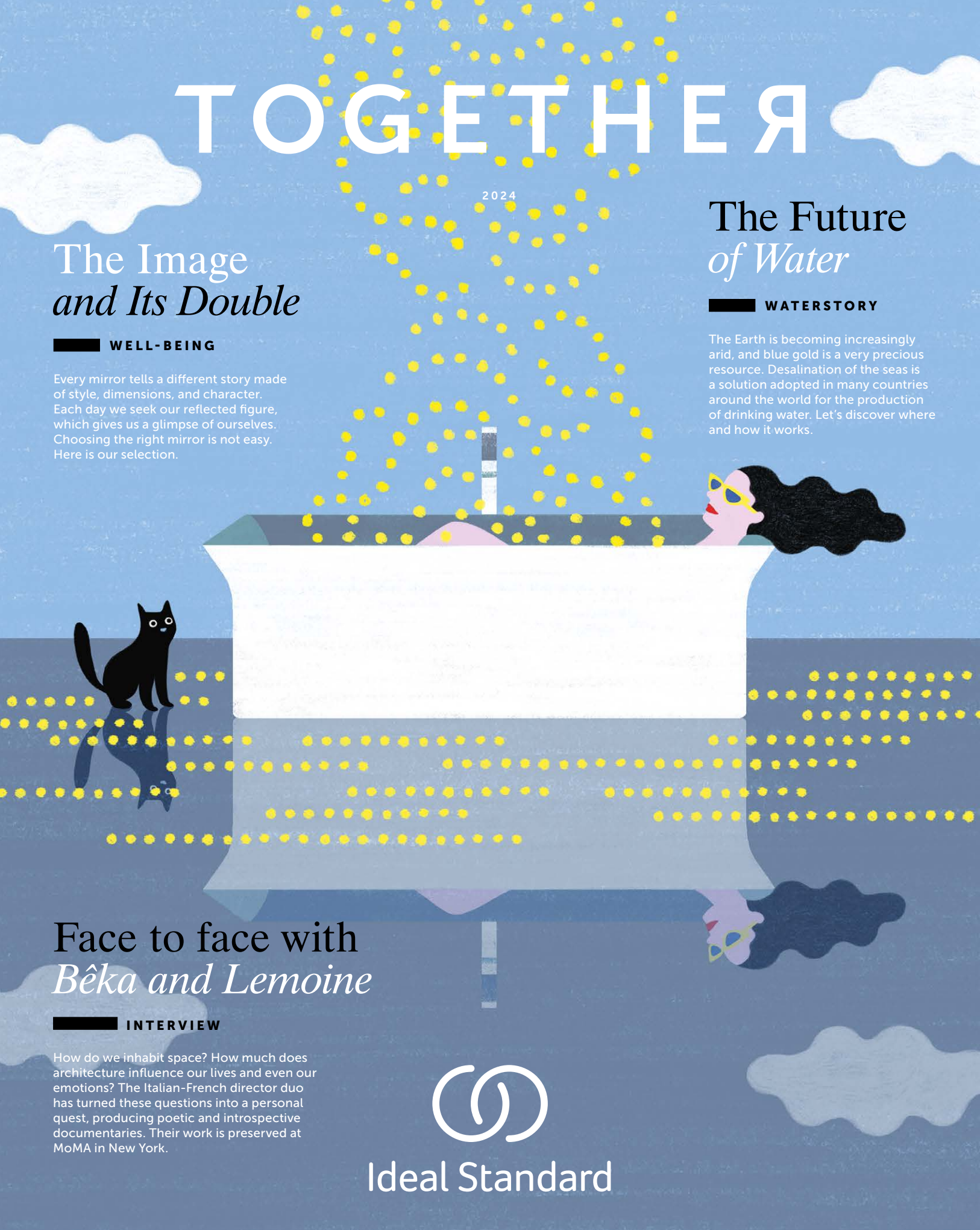
Face to face with *Bêka and Lemoine*

INTERVIEW

How do we inhabit space? How much does architecture influence our lives and even our emotions? The Italian-French director duo has turned these questions into a personal quest, producing poetic and introspective documentaries. Their work is preserved at MoMA in New York.



Ideal Standard





Singular Solutions
from Ideal Standard



Idealrain ▶
Head shower

Idealrain ▶
Showering
accessories

Ceratherm Navigo
Shower mixer

Conca
Towel rail

Joy ▶
Freestanding
bath spout

Conca ▶
Freestanding
bathtub



Ipalyss Vessel
Connect Air
Wall-mounted basin mixer
Conca Furniture

TOGETHER

2024



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Unity is strength
Last September, Villeroy & Boch AG officially signed the contract to acquire the operating companies of the Ideal Standard Group. The acquisition was successfully completed in March 2024. And the story continues.



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In Between: Face to Face with Bêka and Lemoine
An emotional journey through the eyes of a pair of poetic and introspective filmmakers. Discover how space influences our lives and even our emotions.



FOCUS 27
Timeless / The Secrets to Lasting Success
What are the ingredients for an object to have a long life and thus be more sustainable? According to Dieter Rams, one should avoid following fashion too closely, design with attention to detail, and carefully observe human needs. Roberto Palomba shares the secrets of *evergreen* design.



OBJECTS 37
A Large Family
It's called *i.life*, and with formal beauty and technical quality, it meets every bathroom need, combining creativity with centuries of experience.



PALETTE 43
Grey Matter
It offers infinite variations, eccentric shades, and unusual combinations. It brightens soft colours and softens strong ones while maintaining an innate elegance. Discovering grey, the colour of calm.



SPECIAL 53
The Art of Victory
2024 begins with a bang for Ideal Standard, bringing home Red Dot and iF Design Awards for three collections: *Alu+*, *La Dolce Vita®*, and *Solos*, all designed by the Italian studio Palomba Serafini Associati.



WATER STORY 59
The Future of Water
The water crisis forces us to study solutions capable of mitigating increasing drought on Earth. Among the pros and cons, desalination of the seas is an increasingly pursued path.



WELL-BEING 63
The Image and Its Double
Every day we seek our reflected figure; that here and now that gives us a glimpse of ourselves. With careful research and a bit of irony, we have selected collectible mirrors and functional objects.



TALENTS 73
The Night Brings Sweet Advice
Giacomo and Yin met talking about music and playing the piano. From there, a dynamic duo full of creative ideas like *Naëve*, the special pastry shop in Milan, was born.

UNITY

IT HAD BEEN IN DISCUSSION FOR SOME TIME, AND NOW IT'S OFFICIAL: ONE OF THE LARGEST BATHROOM PRODUCT GROUPS IN EUROPE (AND BEYOND) HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED, THANKS TO VILLEROY & BOCH AG'S ACQUISITION OF THE OPERATIONAL COMPANIES OF THE IDEAL STANDARD GROUP.

IS STRENGTH

Last September, Villeroy & Boch AG officially signed the contract to acquire the operating companies of the Ideal Standard Group. The acquisition was successfully completed in March 2024.

With its 276-year history, Villeroy & Boch has a unique corporate heritage. Hardly any other premium brand with a global reputation can look back on a comparable history and sustained success. On its way from a small workshop founded in 1748 to an international group, Villeroy & Boch has transformed itself from a production-oriented ceramics manufacturer to a comprehensive lifestyle provider.

As early as 1836, François Boch, a successful entrepreneur, sought and found in Nicolas Villeroy, a terracotta manufacturer, the perfect partner to create an industrial group capable of meeting the needs of the market, from tableware to mosaics and construction. This history, rich in technology, entrepreneurship and design, also led to a collaboration with the brilliant designer and artist Luigi Colani in 1975.



On the previous page: The image shows the smelting process at the Ideal Standard fittings plant in Bulgaria. Above: *Neptun*, the emerald green glass bowl designed by Luigi Colani for Villeroy & Boch in the 1970s.

Colani was commissioned to develop a new bathroom concept that transformed the bathroom from a hygiene room into a personal wellness space. From that moment on, the bathroom was no longer just a place for personal hygiene, but acquired the same importance as other living spaces and became an expression of individual aesthetics. For many people, it became a personal retreat for relaxation and recuperation.

Today, Colani is still a point of reference for the new generation of designers and his iconic pieces are auctioned and sold in the most prestigious international design galleries. Itself with roots dating back over 100 years, Ideal Standard also established itself at the forefront of this new concept for living in the bathroom. Thanks to major collaborations, the company transformed a utilitarian space into a place of well-being and elegance, introducing sanitaryware collections that furnished post-war Italy and brought style and functionality to many parts of the world.

The parallels between the two companies' histories are obvious. Villeroy & Boch and Ideal Standard are linked not only by traditional brands, but also by values such as a strong focus on quality and service, a flair for good design and a constant drive for innovation. Both brands are now united under the umbrella of Villeroy & Boch.

The business models of Ideal Standard and Villeroy & Boch also complement each other perfectly. While Villeroy & Boch's sales strategy focuses primarily on upmarket private customers, Ideal Standard is primarily active in the project business, serving public institutions, healthcare facilities and large residential, hotel and commercial property developers. In addition to its wide range of sanitary ceramics and other products, Ideal Standard also has a well-established fittings business. We asked the group's new CEO, Gabi Schupp, about her vision for the future of this merger.



Above: A collectible piece also designed by Luigi Colani in the 1970s. This sink, produced by Villeroy & Boch, was intended to be installed centrally in the room. The two basins are separated by a wide chrome metal arch featuring a central mirror. The innovative design is complemented by two lamps, four small glass fans, a towel rack, and two power outlets. Today, this piece, like other works by Colani, is highly sought after by design collectors and often featured at auctions.

At the beginning of March, Villeroy & Boch completed the acquisition of Ideal Standard. How have your first months as CEO of the newly formed Group been?

Very exciting. We were competitors until the official closing. From one day to the next, we became one company with twice as many employees, and it's great to get to know so many of them.

What benefits do you foresee for both companies following the acquisition?

The business models of the bathroom and wellness divisions of Villeroy & Boch and Ideal Standard are highly compatible and complement each other perfectly. The merger will strengthen both our reputation and the credibility of our global presence.

For example, Ideal Standard will improve its access to markets and benefit from Villeroy & Boch's strong market position in Central and Northern Europe and its presence in APAC. Likewise, Ideal Standard will enable Villeroy & Boch to strengthen its position in growth areas such as the Middle East.

In addition to strengthening the business, how will the two companies enrich each other?

Our aim is to grow together quickly as one company - at various levels. We will capitalise on our complementary strengths and leverage synergies to drive our profitable growth. One area will be our global network. Employees will have better access to experts, tools, the companies' individual infrastructures and various career and development opportunities as the enlarged company opens up new possibilities. We will also foster better collaboration and help our employees to get to know each other, even across different business areas.



Photo: Jennifer Weyland

Above: Gabi Schupp, CEO of the Villeroy & Boch Group.

What are the differences between the cultures of the two companies?

What unites us and what we stand for as a company is outstanding quality, high design expertise, absolute consumer focus and the constant pursuit of innovation. In addition to our similarities, we see great potential in our differences. For example, Ideal Standard is organised in a more decentralised way which we see as a great learning opportunity for the combined company.

How will Ideal Standard be integrated into the Group?

Ideal Standard is now an integral part of the Villeroy & Boch Group. Our aim is to grow together as one company, leveraging our complementary strengths and synergies to drive our profitable growth. Mettlach will remain the Group's headquarters, while Ideal Standard will continue to be managed from Brussels. However, the integration of the two organisations is an ongoing process that will take some time. To facilitate the process, we have created opportunities for joint dialogue while maintaining the focus on our business.

What are the next milestones?

In 2024, the focus will be on carefully and comprehensively finalising the analysis of the current situation, both structurally and culturally. We have established an Integration Programme Management Office to ensure a structured implementation of the integration process. This IMO started its work in September 2023 and coordinates the individual integration teams in functions, such as IT, Finance and the defined project teams.

What will happen to the brand names in future?

The Ideal Standard and Villeroy & Boch brand names are important differentiators. We will continue to pursue a multi-brand strategy in the future. This will enable our customers and partners to benefit from an even broader portfolio of tailored solutions in the future. The Ideal Standard brand will become part of the Villeroy & Boch Group. The brand name and logo will be retained.

Is it conceivable to have a showroom that integrates the two brands?

It is definitely possible. We are even planning a joint trade fair stand at ISH in Frankfurt next year.

How has the new Group positioned itself in the market?

Together, we have joined the ranks of Europe's largest manufacturers of bathroom products.

What is your vision of the ideal bathroom?

A feel-good place that invites you to relax and linger and is equipped with high-quality products and strong design.

On the following page: A majestic view of the Villeroy & Boch headquarters, located in a former Benedictine abbey in Mettlach, Saarland, Germany. This location also houses the Villeroy & Boch Museum, which boasts a rich collection of unique pieces showcasing the evolution of styles and innovations in materials and sanitaryware for bathroom hygiene.





Interview with Ila Bêka
and Louise Lemoine

IN BETWEEN

AN EMOTIONAL JOURNEY THROUGH THE EYES OF A PAIR OF POETIC AND INTROSPECTIVE FILMMAKERS
TO DISCOVER THAT SPACE INFLUENCES OUR LIVES AND ALSO OUR EMOTIONS.



Although they are renowned as designers of image and vision, Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine see themselves as outsiders. He an architect, she an art history graduate, they have been making documentaries for more than 20 years, focusing mainly on the relationship between body and space. “The film medium is our language,” they have said several times, “but we do not belong to the economy of traditional cinema. We do the work of the film maker without ever having studied film. This gives us freedom, allows us to draw on different disciplines without constraints: it is an infinite richness. We like to navigate in non-fiction cinema, but also in the world of contemporary art, social sciences, psychology, always following bodies moving in domestic or urban spaces.”

Since 2007 they have developed a film series called *Living Architectures* that “has profoundly changed the way we look at architecture” (Domus). *Koolhaas Houselife*, known internationally as an “architectural cult film” (El Pais), is probably the most famous documentary in their series, starring Guadalupe - the irresistible housekeeper of the Bordeaux House built by Rem Koolhaas. Presented by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York as one of the “most exciting and critical design projects of the year 2016”, Bêka & Lemoine’s complete work was acquired that same year by the Museum of Modern Art in New York (MoMA) for its permanent collection. They have created more than thirty films, including the major project *Homo Urbanus*, where they broadened their focus to explore urban dynamics. *The Emotional Power of Space*, a book, is their latest work (B&P, 2023).

We caught up with Ila Bêka and together with him we explored the world around us through different eyes, from a little-observed perspective: the body’s reactions in space.

What is architecture for you?

When attending an architecture school, the answer you give yourself is often more related to construction: how much can architecture contribute to a housing system? What are the indispensable conditions to be given to those who live there? Designing is actually also thinking about how to relate to space. It is a very complex thing that is dealt with very little in architecture schools. Defining space is complicated, even more so is understanding what the relationship with space is. What does it mean? We all experience built environments. It is something intuitive, nobody teaches it: in some places you are fine, in others less so. The body is controlled by the construction of the space itself: you act as the architect intended. Everything is built on standardised movements and this affects our physical and psychic well-being much more than we think. I am thinking for example of the Rehab Basel Rehabilitation Centre built by Herzog & de Mounon. Here the design helps the treatment: the greenery around the building, the portholes above the bed that open up to the sky and let you see the clouds, the moon. They seem like details but today we know that this improves the men’s living conditions and also accelerates healing. The psychological part is fundamental. Conversely, the suburbs of Paris with those anonymous barracks contribute to the development of extreme and terrible social situations.



Left. An image of Guadalupe Acedo, the protagonist of the first feature film by the Italian-French duo, Koolhaas Houselife.

Above. *The Living Architectures* box set, a collection of documentaries by Bêka and Lemoine, purchased by the MoMa in New York in 2008.

How did the idea of making documentaries come about?

We never had the idea. Our films document a reality, but they serve to talk about something else. Our starting question was: how do we visualise and share experiences related to space? The emotions of being in a built environment? Since time immemorial, the image of architecture that we see published in books or newspapers only exists in the heads of designers or in published photos. The reality is different. We continue to convey images of spaces that nobody lives, without real signs, bodies, movements, adaptations. This feeds a collective imagination completely disconnected from real life, especially in those who will build those spaces in the future. We started from here, trying to create a sort of balance between this disconnected imagery of reality and a different vision that takes into account the movement of bodies within a space, the impressions of those who experience each environment intuitively, unconsciously. That is why in our first film we chose to give voice

to a cleaning lady who knew nothing about architecture in the sense of architecture school, but knew a lot in terms of spaces. It is one of the cases where the relationship between body and space is very strong.

What is the response of architects?

In the case of *Koolhaas Houselife*, when the film was finished, we did an interview with Rem Koolhaas - you can watch it after the film; it lasts 10 minutes. We were interested to know what he thought of our approach. It is the theme of post occupancy, what happens to a project once it is inhabited. He was confronted with issues he had not considered and welcomed our insight. It is a very interesting debate for architects even if it is difficult for them to accept that a building evolves in a different way than they had thought. The architect's control of the space is fundamental - many do not allow interventions without their consent - and seeing it transformed often creates a shock.

What is your house like?

Provisional in the sense that we have been living in friends' houses for years. We are more interested in where we stay than how we stay. In fact, we have changed very often, taking the opportunity to live in houses that were vacant at a particular time. We are now in Venice in the flat of a friend who gave it to us for a while. We like living in houses lived in by others: it is very interesting and educational.

What place has remained most in your heart?

Japan. We left for six months for a French artistic residency. It was a very fertile period, we shot several films: in the Land of the Rising Sun, the body-space relationship is constructed very differently from ours. We made *Moriyama-San*, a fundamental documentary because it made us understand

how it is possible to form a personal relationship with space, allowing you to live more fully and not just using spaces. In Japan, I found myself moving like an elephant in a glass house: it has different rules and very small environments. This allowed me to read my relationship with space backwards.

What should the bathroom look like for you?

Going back to Japan, I really like the idea of the public bathroom. The private one is the most intimate space, but then there is the shared one. We don't have that option here. Maybe in Northern Europe. The shared bathroom connects bodies. The western bathroom, on the other hand, is conceived as a solitary place: it is you and your body. In the public one you wash together with strangers: it is a very strong experience. Unfortunately, they too are becoming westernised and are therefore closing down a lot of these realities.



Rehab from Rehab (2023)

The Rehab Basel rehabilitation centre, built by Herzog & de Meuron in 2002, is the subject of the documentary *Rehab from Rehab* (2023). It examines how architectural design can aid healing: the greenery around the building and the portholes above the beds opening to the sky are details that improve patient conditions and speed up recovery.



Moriyama San

It took ten years to complete *Moriyama San*, the film dedicated to his house in Tokyo designed by Ryue Nishizawa. The meeting with Moriyama was a turning point for the directors, allowing them to deeply understand the relationship between space and the body that inhabits it: in this case, a true symbiosis between the habits of the particular tenant and his home.

You work as a pair. Do you consider this a strength or a compromise? Have you ever thought about working separately?

Big plus, with Louise I got back into architecture through films. When you are alone, you need to check if your ideas hold. I always remember a statement by Michelangelo Antonioni who once said that he woke up in the middle of the night with an extraordinary idea and in the dark wrote two sentences so as not to forget it. Then he fell asleep all excited. In the morning he reread the note where it just said: it is a love story. That to me is a great message; it means that you need the light to compare your intuitions: when you are alone you cannot understand whether an idea is good or not and how it can evolve. The other person questions you, makes criticisms that serve to move forward. We are lucky because, besides working together, we are also a couple in life. There is love between us, there is also a kind of tolerance linked to the feeling that unites us. A relationship is interesting when there is both an intellectual and emotional understanding. Recognising that one is better than the other is more difficult between partners who are exclusively united by work.

A relationship is interesting when there is both an intellectual and emotional understanding. Recognising that one is better than the other is more difficult between partners who are exclusively united by work.

In *The Emotional Power of Space*, a book they published last year, they set a milestone in their way of working. And they do so by interviewing international architects who share this approach and way of reading design. Juhani Pallasmaa from Finland reveals that “Every time I enter a space, that space enters me. Architecture is an exchange. I do not look at architecture, rather I find architecture in me. It is a very intimate relationship.” While Swiss designer Jacques Herzog of Herzog & de Meuron focuses on the movements of bodies. “One of my obsessions,” he says, “is watching and analysing the movements of people in space. Their performance, so to speak. In the city or in the country, the way people move reveals a lot about their psychology, their state of mind. What is their body language? Do they seek protection or do they prefer exposure? Where do they choose to sit? Protected by a tree or under a rock? Or rather on the grass, exposed to the sun? It looks like a kind of theatre, a play made up of human gestures performed in space.”

“Like sound, space envelops us, we are immersed in it, it flows through us. It indicates our paths, defines our movements and behaviour, our rhythms; it frames our interactions with objects, surfaces and people, it structures our gazes and points of view.”

In the introduction to their book, Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine tell the story of architecture by questioning the allure of the image, which links buildings to preconceived ideas of perfection, virtuosity and infallibility, to demonstrate the fragility and vulnerable beauty of architecture as told and witnessed by the people who live in, use or care for the spaces they have selected. They are interested in “capturing the spontaneous, intuitive reactions of the anonymous people who inhabit, adapt to, endure or enjoy the spaces they have not necessarily chosen, but which condition their lives.”

Their intention is to let architecture speak to us, from an inner, personal and subjective point of view.

www.bekalemoine.com



Tokyo Ride

Top. Kazuyo Sejima in her home in a frame from *Tokyo Ride*. Through this film, we discover where the Japanese architect lives and her original domestic concept. Above. Ryue Nishizawa, the protagonist of *Tokyo Ride* (2020). On a rainy day, the directors are guided by the Japanese architect to unusual places in the city. A unique opportunity to understand the architectural philosophy of one of the founders of the SANAA studio.

In 2023, Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine wrote and published *The Emotional Power of Space* (B&P, Bêka & Partners Publishers, France), a collection of 12 interviews with well-known architects. The aim was to explore the relationship between body and space and analyse different viewpoints. Among the interviewees were Jacques Herzog, Junya Ishigami, Bijoy Jain and Álvaro Siza.

Complete
filmography

1 – 2008

Koolhaas Houselife (58')
Official Selection at
8th Venice Biennale
of Architecture

2 – 2010

*Inside Piano: The
Submarine* (39'),
The little Beaubourg (26'),
The power of silence (34')

3 – 2013

*Pomerol, Herzog & de
Meuron* (51')

4 – 2013

Xmas Meier (51')

5 – 2013

Gehry's Vertigo (48')
Official Selection at 10th
Venice Biennale
of Architecture (extract)

6 – 2013

25bis (46')

7 – 2014

La Maddalena (12')
Video installation -
Official Selection at
14th Venice Biennale
of Architecture

8 – 2014

24 Heures Sur Place (90')
Special Jury Prize at 32nd
Torino Film Festival

9 – 2014

L'Expérience du Vide (45')

10 – 2014

Barbicania (90')
Art project commissioned
by Barbican Centre

11 – 2015

The Infinite Happiness (85')

12 – 2015

Spiriti (15x3')
Video installation -
Art project commissioned
by Fondazione Prada,
Milan

13 – 2016

*Voyage Autour de
la Lune* (75')

14 – 2016

Selling Dreams (25' +
12') Video installation -
Official Selection Oslo
Triennale

15 – 2017

Moriyama-San (63')
Best Prize at Architecture
Film Festival London

16 – 2019

Butohouse (34')
International Premiere at
DocAviv Film Festival.

17 – 2017-2024

Homo Urbanus (13 x 55')
Video installation -
Official Selection Seoul
Biennale, Agora Biennale
in Bordeaux

18 – 2020

Tokyo Ride (90')
Artistic Vision Award,
Depth of Field
Competition. Best Prize:
Docaviv Film Festival, 2020

19 – 2021

*Oslavia, The Cave of
the Past Future* (17')
Video installation - World
premiere at MAXXI
Museum in Rome

20 – 2022

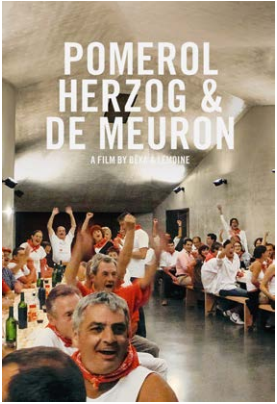
Big Ears Listen with Feet
(93') Special Mention,
Milano Design Film
Festival, Milan

21 – 2023

Rehab from Rehab (86')
In competition at
Jihlava International
Documentary Film
Festival, Prague

22 – 2024

The Sense of Tuning (96')
International Premiere at
Fondation Cartier in Paris



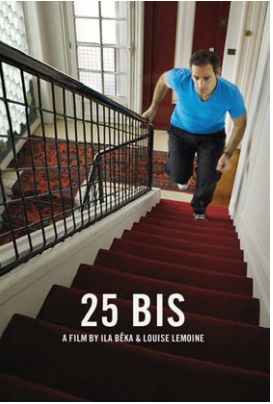
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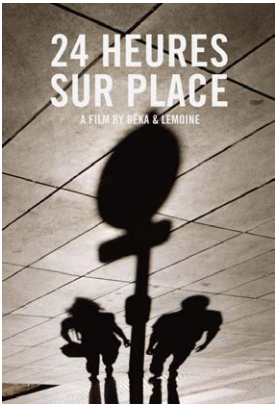
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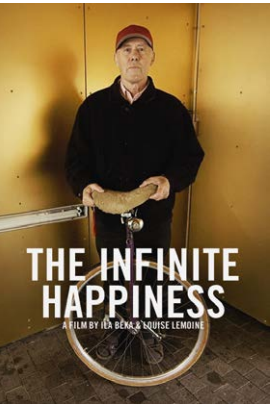
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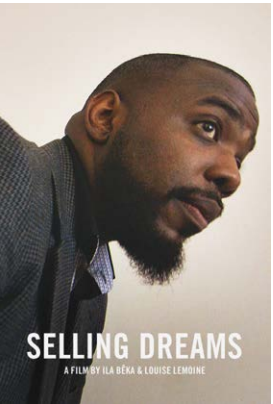
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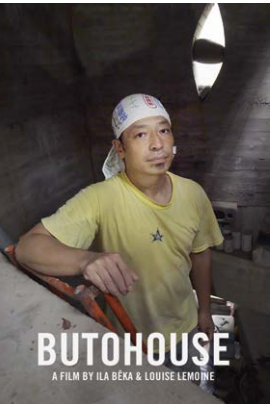
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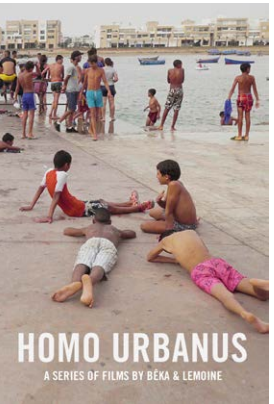
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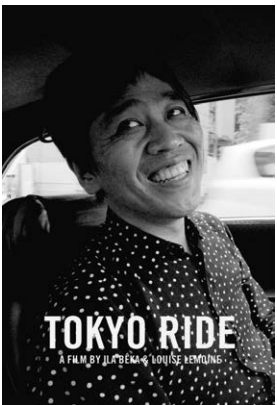
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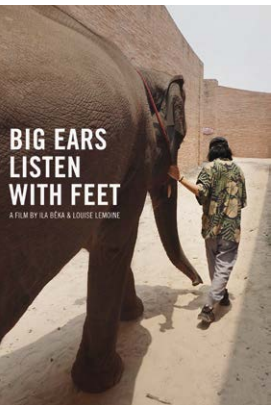
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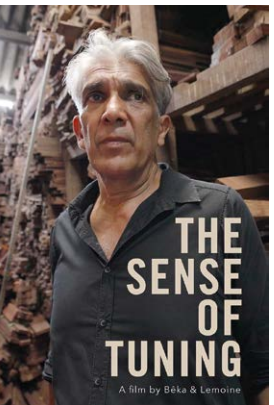
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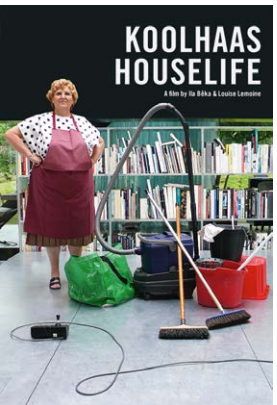
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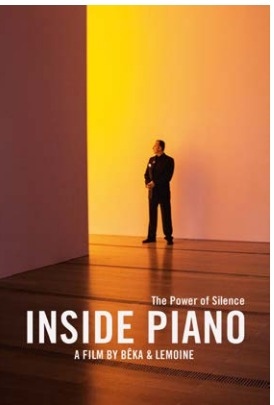
Photo: Moritz Bernouly – All other images courtesy of Bêka and Lemoine

Left: Directors Ila Bêka and Louise Lemoine. Below and on the opposite page: Posters of their documentaries.

On the following page: A scene from *Barbicania* (2014), which explores London's brutalist architecture. Presented as a series of diary vignettes, the film invites viewers to discover the unique personalities, lifestyles, and architectural landscapes that make the Barbican so special.



1



2



**BRAUN**

WHAT ARE THE INGREDIENTS FOR AN OBJECT TO HAVE
A LONG LIFE AND THUS BE MORE SUSTAINABLE?

TIME- LESS

ACCORDING TO THE MASTER OF DESIGN, DIETER RAMS, ONE MUST AVOID FOLLOWING FASHION TOO MUCH,
ONE MUST CAREFULLY DESIGN DETAILS AND CAREFULLY OBSERVE HUMAN NEEDS. HERE'S HOW TO MAKE AN OBJECT
CONTEMPORARY WITHOUT EVER LOOKING OLD-FASHIONED.

We cannot understand good design if we do not understand people

With the aim of answering the question “Is mine good design?”, the German Dieter Rams - born in 1932 and for more than 30 years head of the product design team of the Braun brand - created a collection of 10 principles, commandments, representative of his minimalist and functional thinking. “Unlike fashionable design,” he said, “an object that can last for many years, even in today’s disposable society, must be designed down to the smallest detail. Nothing must be arbitrary or left to chance. Care and accuracy in the design process show respect for the user.”

He argued that the aesthetic quality of a product is intrinsic to its usefulness because the items we interact with daily shape our identity and well-being, and only well-crafted objects can achieve beauty. Echoing this sentiment, historian and philosopher Hannah Arendt asserted in “The Human Condition” (1958) that humans are profoundly influenced by their environment - the Earth - and the objects, often of human creation, within it. Consequently, a change in environment could fundamentally transform the human condition itself.

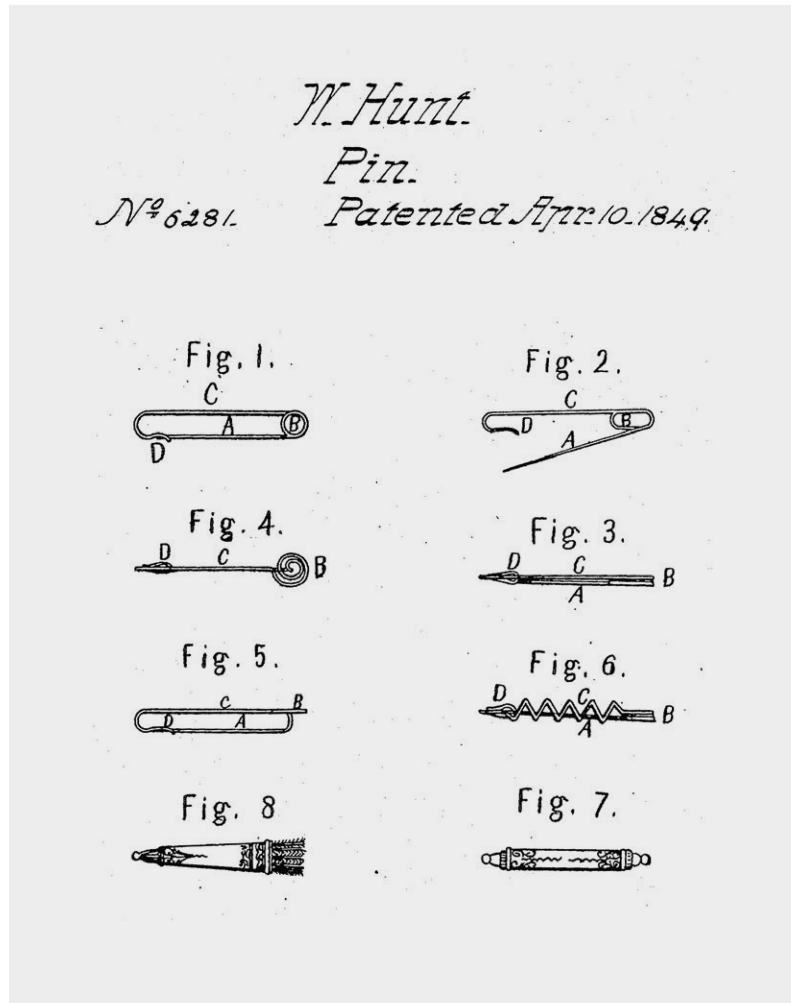
Today, as then, we know that the possibilities for innovation are by no means exhausted. Technological development always offers new opportunities for innovative design. But design develops hand in hand with innovative technology and can never be an end in itself.

“We cannot understand good design if we do not understand people,” Rams used to say, and this, applied today, must also consider the impact of an object on the environment, how we produce and consume things, and ultimately the choices we make at home and at work.

Let’s delve deeper into the significance of objects and their environment. Some projects, objects, and architecture possess a unique and timeless quality that transcends the passage of time. What sets them apart? Primarily, it’s their perfect form derived from functionality, their enduring usability, and the desire not to replace them. These objects are born from ideas that stretch beyond the constraints of the conscious mind or current knowledge. They embody innovation without necessarily relying on novelty; instead, they address, often subconsciously, the deepest and most fundamental human needs. Consider honesty as a starting point: a design cannot promise functionality that it fails to deliver when used. Functional products are akin to tools - they serve a purpose and are neither mere decorations nor artworks. Consequently, their design should be neutral, restrained, and discreet, allowing space for the user’s self-expression. Communication is equally essential; for instance, signage and graphics should be clear, simple, and universally understandable.

Previous page: Detail of a table clock designed by Dieter Rams. With its essential and functional design, it perfectly embodies the minimalist philosophy of the German designer, who led the Braun design team for many years. Photo: © Friedrich Haag – Opposite page: The bicycle designed by Alex Moulton in the 1960s. Its innovative design, functionality, and ease of assembly have ensured its continued relevance today. Photo: Moulton Bicycle Company





Innovation has always been a pivotal element in design. Let's analyse the bicycle designed by Alex Moulton in the 1960s: the addition of front and rear suspension, a comfortable seat with a frame that made it suitable for use even by women wearing skirts and the ability to easily disassemble it to fit into a boot are some of the features that make this design still perfectly relevant today. Functionality is closely linked to the quality and durability of an object. Think of the potato peeler or safety pin. These are objects that have magically stood the test of time and continue to be on the market, maintaining their form unchanged. The safety pin - the first to have a spring-action mechanism that protected fingers from injury - was patented in 1849 by William Hunt who had already invented a sewing machine, but decided not to patent it for fear of leaving many people out of work. Since then, the design has remained practically unchanged, yet its uses are many and varied - a simply perfect object.

The long life of some objects certainly relates to sociological and behavioural aspects of society. We can analyse clothing accessories, shoes, hats and clothes that have never changed shape since their first release. The photographic industry has undergone radical transformations in recent years due to the advent of the digital image, a revolution that has allowed brands that had no authority in the sector until now to propose seductive and fascinating products and technologies. Giants of photography have collapsed, Kodak among them, while others have been able to withstand the change, such as the Leica brand. Although now firmly digitalised, this brand has become radicalised in the collective imagination among both professional photographers and consumers.

Back in 1914, Leitz Camera engineer Oskar Barnack had already created the prototype of what would later become the Leica that first used the 35mm film, which became known as the Leica format. Since then, Leica has simply and naturally been able to respect its noble past by adapting it to new technologies, but above all by respecting the consumer. How? Even the digital successors to the analogue Leica maintain the essence of a manual camera, continuing to empower the photographer by leaving the responsibility for the final image in their hands. This stands in contrast to fully automatic cameras that diminish the photographer's authority by simplifying everything to "it does it all."

Functionality is intrinsically tied to the quality and durability of an object. Take the safety pin, for example: a timeless invention patented by Walter Hunt in 1849, it remains virtually unchanged in design and continues to be an essential item.

At this point we cannot fail to mention beauty, a not insignificant element in the definition of good design. Consider the timeless example of *Chanel N°5*, the world's top-selling perfume with over 80 million bottles sold. This iconic fragrance was groundbreaking for its use of aldehydes, chemical compounds that enhance the longevity and complexity of natural scents on the skin. The packaging was a simple transparent apothecary bottle made of precious glass with a minimal black and white label in the graceless font typical of the avant-garde design of the time, while the logo was printed on the bottle cap as early as 1921. Over the years, the *Chanel N°5* bottle became such an identifiable object that Andy Warhol decided to commemorate its iconic status in the mid-1980s with a work entitled *Ads: Chanel*, a series of silkscreens inspired by advertisements for the perfume that appeared between 1954 and 1956. It was no coincidence then that in 1959 *Chanel N°5* became part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Modern Art in New York: innovation, functional design and graphics were and remain the infallible ingredients.

If the beauty of Chanel stems from a person's innate talent and sensitivity, in the case of Dieter Rams, beauty is an achievement realised through method, discipline and thought. His 'Less but better' principle remains the inspiration for hundreds of products, but above all for a generation of designers of which Jonny Ive, Apple's designer for iPod, iPhone, iMac and other iconic products is certainly the most acclaimed representative. Rams is concerned with how we use and consume things, aware that design is the intermediary between technology and people, and through his work he demonstrates that a useful object can also be beautiful and durable because in its essential and minimalist forms it is satisfying and gratifying: the importance of the end user is and remains at the top of the designer's concerns. Ultimately, design for him is not a constraint, but an advantage that leaves more room for our real life. Yes, real life. Today we live in an era in which the relationship between man, humanity and technology has been radically reversed. Every day, society rushes to adopt technologies whose full implications and significance often remain misunderstood, in a frantic race whose endpoint lies beyond our current horizons.



Above, left: Even in today's digital age, Leica has firmly established itself in the collective imagination of both professional photographers and consumers as the premier camera brand, a true symbol of enduring quality and excellence. Above, right: The iconic *Chanel N°5* bottle, a timeless classic since 1921. With over 80 million bottles sold, it has become a symbol of elegance and luxury. So iconic, in fact, that Andy Warhol immortalised it in a series of screen prints between 1954 and 1956.



Beauty is an achievement attained through method, discipline, and thought.

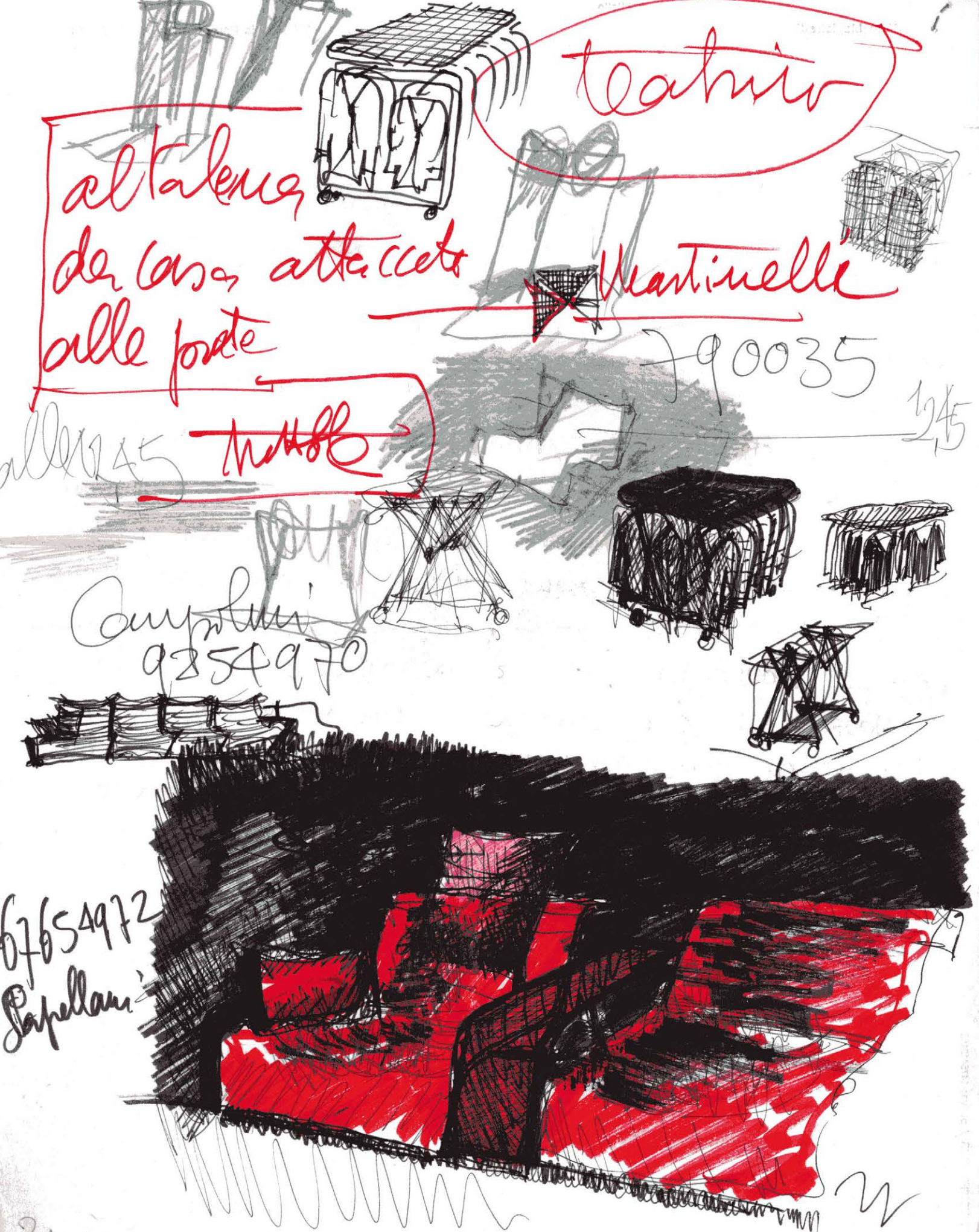
Dieter Rams

In the mid-1990s, we possessed technology that would later evolve into what we now know as 2G (a precursor to today's 5G). However, its practical application was limited to solitary games due to the lack of appropriate infrastructure. Technologies that were firmly established on a theoretical level often remained unused or were dismissed as entirely useless simply because society was not prepared to adopt them. For instance, in 1493, Leonardo Da Vinci designed a theoretical model of what would later become a helicopter, but its practical utility for rapid transportation of goods or people was not recognised at the time, relegating it to recreational curiosity for centuries. Today, this scenario has reversed, and we frequently find ourselves surrounded by objects that do not truly meet our needs.



Dieter Rams featured in a scene from *Rams*, a 2018 film directed and produced by American filmmaker Gary Hustwit. For more information and to view the film, visit: www.hustwit.com/rams. Opposite page: The *Braun TP1* radio from 1959. As Braun's design director, Dieter Rams pioneered several revolutionary audio products: the first all-wave receiver, the first portable music player, the first wall-mounted integrated audio system, the first stackable hi-fi system (now showcased at MoMA), and the first turntable with a plexiglass cover. Under his leadership, Braun became the first company to champion high-quality audio experiences.





Quality and Innovation. The secrets to *lasting success*

Timeless aesthetics and groundbreaking innovation are the cornerstones of Roberto Palomba and Ludovica Serafini's work. As esteemed designers and architects, they bring their expertise to a diverse range of projects, including hospitality, product design, fashion, and boating.

Clean forms are in your DNA.

What makes a project truly timeless?

Roberto Palomba explains, "The measure of a great project is its ability to endure. It remains in production for years and continues to be valued by its users over time. The key distinction," he adds, "lies between projects that have made a historical impact and are celebrated in museums but are no longer available, and those that remain actively on the market. A successful project must start with meeting the client's needs. If we look at the results, long-lasting design is one that forms a lasting bond with time, continuing to enhance homes and remain functional after years, even decades. The rest becomes history to be studied."

Over three decades, the Palomba Serafini studio has developed a vast array of products, with around a hundred proving their enduring relevance and establishing a meaningful connection with users. What distinguishes these products?

"They are meticulously crafted with a deep understanding of human needs and, above all, aim to enhance people's quality of life. For me, design culture means conveying clear ideas, fostering dialogue, empathy, and interaction, and ensuring high quality. It also involves the power to subtly transform daily habits by introducing simple yet innovative changes."

What does it mean to innovate?

"For me, a crucial aspect of innovation is updating existing products rather than constantly designing new ones just to follow the latest trends. Trends may be fleeting, but a truly enduring design withstands the test of time. Technology and materials might evolve, and proportions may shift, but the essence of the original design remains intact."

Take Vico Magistretti's *Maralunga* sofa, for example." As noted on the Milanese architect's foundation's website, "The *Maralunga* sofa transcends mere fashion and style. Magistretti's approach highlights the concept of transformability. The design is not rigidly formal but adapts to evolving functional needs, such as watching TV, reflecting the core idea behind every thoughtful design project. Still in production with slight dimensional adjustments, *Maralunga* achieved international acclaim and won the *ADI Compasso d'Oro* in 1979."

"If we expand our perspective," Roberto Palomba adds, "the most enduring designs are often Scandinavian, which partially echo the simplicity and culture of Japan. Designers like Alvar Aalto, Arne Jacobsen, Borge Mogensen, Hans J. Wegner, Verner Panton, and Poul Henningsen exemplify this. Minimalism and functionality are their hallmarks. Their work features delicate profiles and flowing curves, many inspired by nature. Both Scandinavian and Japanese design cultures emphasise the continual refinement of a project to pass it down through generations in its most modern form. Central to this is a commitment to quality that seeks to enhance human life."

Future projects?

"Striving to make exceptional living spaces accessible to all."

Opposite page: A sketch of the *Maralunga* sofa, designed by Vico Magistretti for Cassina in 1973. Courtesy of Archivio Studio Magistretti - Fondazione Vico Magistretti.



A large family

IDEAL STANDARD HAS CREATED *I.LIFE*, A COMPREHENSIVE AND INTUITIVE COLLECTION DESIGNED TO MEET ALL THE DEMANDS OF MODERN LIVING. COMBINING AESTHETIC BEAUTY WITH ADVANCED TECHNICAL FEATURES, *I.LIFE* OFFERS SOLUTIONS FOR EVERY BATHROOM NEED. THIS INNOVATIVE RANGE BLENDS CREATIVE DESIGN WITH DECADES OF EXPERTISE, ENSURING BOTH FUNCTIONALITY AND STYLE FOR CONTEMPORARY HOMES.

I. life fits into many lifestyles. It interprets large spaces with elegance, is functional in the home, and becomes essential when furnishing only a few square metres. Its aptitude is flexibility expressed in sizes, colour nuances, shapes and dimensions. It is a precise desire to dominate space, to move it to suggest new physiognomies. Depending on need, *i.life* contracts or expands to suit different and personalised environments.

Designed by Palomba Serafini Associati, the collection is defined by soft, rounded shapes. "The new *i.life* collection," explains Roberto Palomba, "is a concrete example of the ability of design to create modern wellness environments; a project that promotes safe and pleasant spaces to live in, regardless of the size or shape of the bathroom. It is an intelligent collection in which design, comfort and hygiene come together perfectly."

Three ranges have been developed. Each is distinguished by specific features and formal characteristics, but all share the same philosophy: to offer excellent and affordable solutions for everyday life.

And in everyday life, the demands are endless. Furnishing small rooms, choosing a shower or not foregoing the bathtub, placing the washbasin in a corner or along a large wall, preferring wall-hung sanitaryware or those complete with pedestal. For these and other needs, the *i.life* collection has grown and from the original *A* series, the *B* and *S* series have been added.

With a variety of washbasins, WCs and bidets, *i.life A* offers a choice of clean, minimalist items. The ceramics are available in three sizes with a pedestal or semi-pedestal option complete with wall-hung and floor-standing sanitary ware.

i.life B while not losing its essential soul is softened by delicate curves and flowing lines. Finally, we find the *S* range, which is perfect for smaller bathrooms, designed specifically to optimise space. *i.life S* is characterised by square yet soft shapes that add a light and elegant touch to the entire collection. All three ranges can be combined with matching furniture in seven finishes and two handle colour options.

There is also a wide choice of bathtubs (duo, asymmetrical, hexagonal and angular), shower trays and enclosures. The two-metre high 8mm shower enclosures with slim profiles in polished aluminium and long, solid handles are in line with the contemporary aesthetics of the entire collection. They are complemented by *UltraFlat S i.life* shower trays in four finishes - pure white, concrete grey, sand and jet black - and in 27 different sizes in square or rectangular shapes.

A final thought goes to the choice of colours. Without sacrificing the classic white, studio Palomba Serafini Associati has developed a refined palette that not only exists as a finish, but is another key element of the project. The result is a perfect match of greys, blacks and sand-inspired colours. Everything is played on nuances and balances: a long and thorough work that has been able to add contemporaneity to classicism.



On the previous page, left side: for small bathrooms, *i.life* provides comprehensive solutions. The dominant colour is grey: glossy for the *i.life B* washbasin and matt for the furniture. The *Ceraplan* basin mixer, IOM towel holder, *Connect 2* shower enclosure, and *Ceratherm T25* shower system are all featured in silk black. The *UltraFlat S i.life* shower tray is shown in concrete grey. The mirror includes ambient lighting. On the previous page, right side: *i.life B* furniture in matt grey.



In this double-page spread, left side: From the *i.life A* series: glossy white ceramic washbasin paired with the *Ceraplan* basin mixer. Right side: Also from the *i.life A* series, washbasin and furniture, *Ceraplan* basin mixer, and backlit mirror. On the next page, left side: *i.life S* complete with washbasin and furniture unit, *Ceraplan* basin mixer, compact WC with *RimLS+*® flushing technology, *Symfo* flush plate, IOM toilet roll holder and towel holder, mirror with ambient lighting. On the next page, right side: *i.life B* washbasin and furniture, *Ceraplan* basin mixer, IOM towel holder, mirror with ambient lighting.



GREY MATTER

A COLOUR THAT CHANGES ITS MEANING DEPENDING ON HOW WE VIEW IT, GREY SERVES AS A LENS FOR OBSERVING AND EVALUATING THE WORLD AROUND US. IT SYMBOLISES CALM AND OFFERS US A MOMENT TO CATCH OUR BREATH. GREY PROVIDES ENDLESS VARIATIONS, ECCENTRIC SHADES, AND UNUSUAL COMBINATIONS. IT BRIGHTENS SOFT COLOURS AND SOFTENS STRONG ONES WHILE ALWAYS MAINTAINING AN INNATE ELEGANCE. BECAUSE IT'S NOT ALL BLACK OR WHITE! THERE ARE ALSO A THOUSAND SHADES OF GREY IN BETWEEN.

A WORLD IN MOTION

The sky and clouds are recurring motifs of Fornasetti, as shown by these delicate and detailed engravings. The *Nuvolette* wallpaper is created in collaboration with Cole & Son and is available in subdued colours that give the pattern a sense of perpetual movement.

→ www.fornasetti.com



WHERE YOU WANT ME

Balancing bold shapes, the *Kízu* table lamp intrigues the eye with its sculptural composition. Made from marble and acrylic, it has compact dimensions. It charges with a USB-C cable and has a 10-hour battery life. Photo: Yellows.dk
 → www.newworks.dk



THE DELICACY OF HANDS

Since 1980, Rina Menardi has been developing her research in the field of ceramics, customising working techniques, exploring colour schemes, and seeking purity of form, all while leaving a touch of craftsmanship. Photo: Alessandro Paderni
 → www.rinamenardi.com

NORDIC SIMPLICITY

Broste Copenhagen is synonymous with cosy, contemporary, and accommodating design that invites you to enjoy small routines as if they were special occasions. In pure Scandinavian style, the *Elouise* breakfast set is made of 100% cotton.
 → www.brostecopenhagen.com





LASTING ELEGANCE

Made with innovative *Diamatec*® ceramic, the *Ipalyss* basin from Ideal Standard features an ultra-thin yet highly durable design. Pictured in *Slate Grey*, paired with the *Joy* basin mixer in *Silver Storm*. *Ipalyss* basins are available in 12 colours.

→ www.idealstandard.co.uk



POST SCRIPTUM

Formafantasma's designs become decorations on porcelain thanks to the craftsmanship, skill, and experience of Ginori 1735's master painters. Working with natural ease, they leave their mark through instinctive movements and abstract signs, updating the concept of decor. By Cassina.
Photo: Paola Pansini.

→ www.cassina.com

A CLASSIC

Polder has an asymmetric shape and a careful combination of colours, materials, and textures. Designed by Hella Jongerius, it features cushions and a sofa body upholstered with different fabrics in carefully coordinated tones. Pictured in grey. By Vitra.

→ www.vitra.com



ALWAYS USEFUL

Marble grit is a versatile and durable material that adds colour and style. The *Janell* garden table is perfect for indoor use, as well as in the garden or on the terrace.

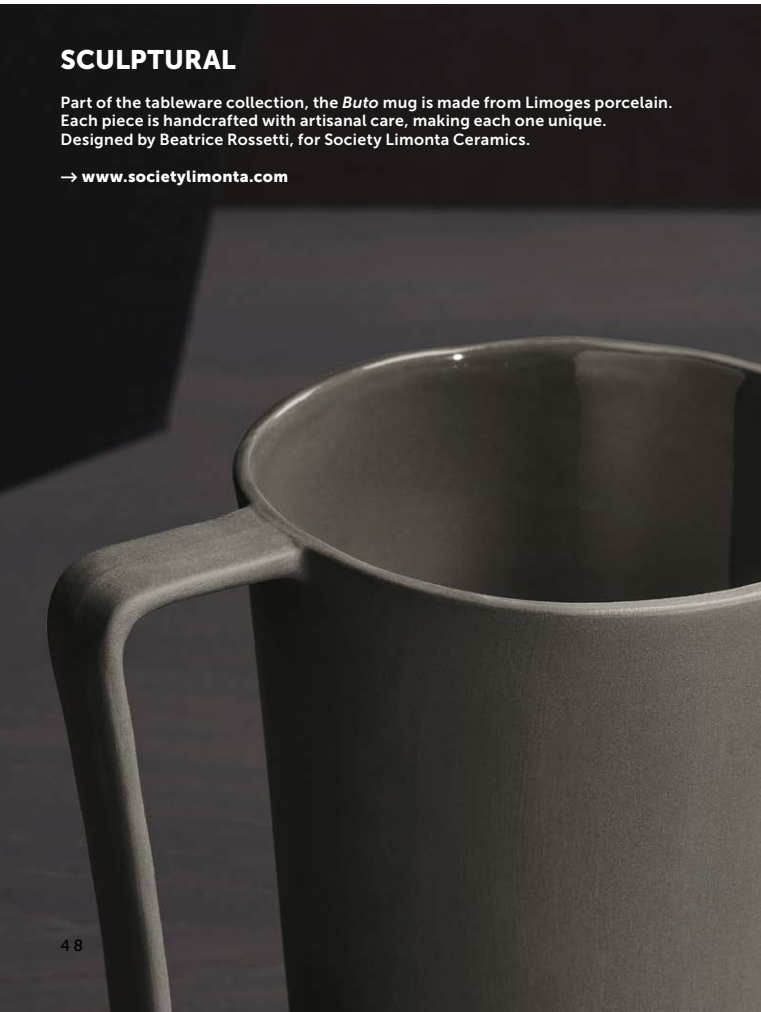
→ www.kavehome.com



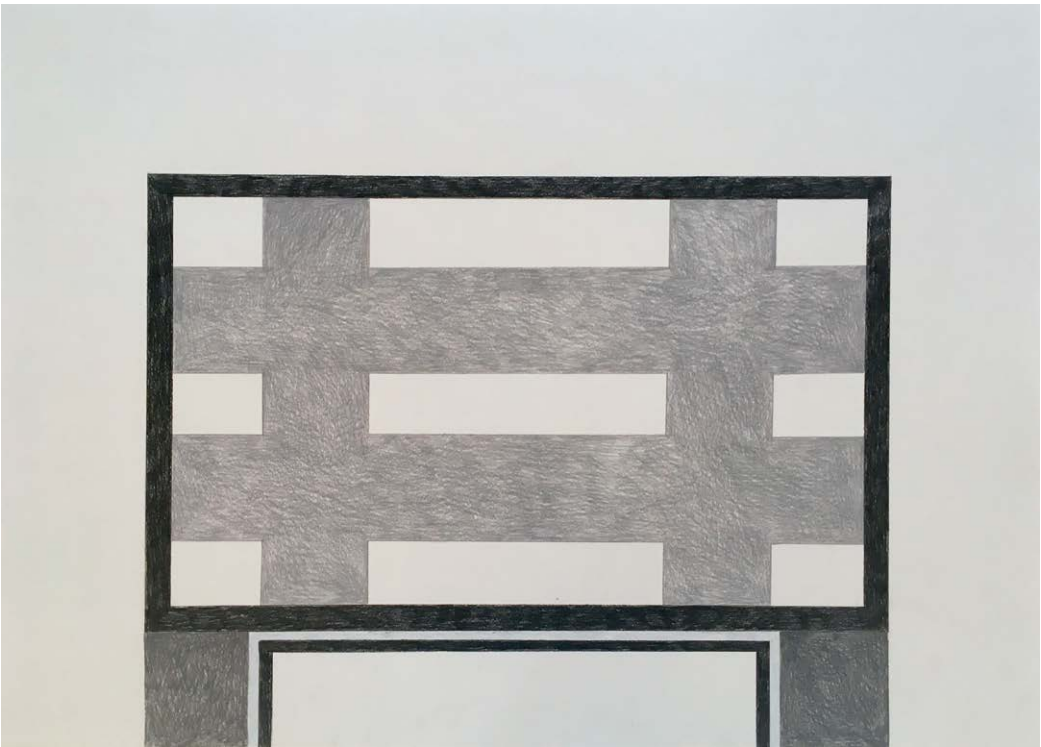
SCULPTURAL

Part of the tableware collection, the *Buto* mug is made from Limoges porcelain. Each piece is handcrafted with artisanal care, making each one unique. Designed by Beatrice Rossetti, for Society Limonta Ceramics.

→ www.societylimonta.com



THE EVERYDAY
IN ART



The creative process of Nathalie Du Pasquier, designer and artist, originates from an instinctive gesture expressed through drawing on paper. The pencil stroke already outlines the work perfectly, in its proportions and immediacy.

→ www.nathaliedupasquier.com



A SIGN OF SPRING

The glass birds by Iittala are among the most iconic classics of Finnish glass art. They come in a wide range of colours, making them versatile for various settings: on the table, near plants and flowers, or on the bookshelf. Designed by Toikka.

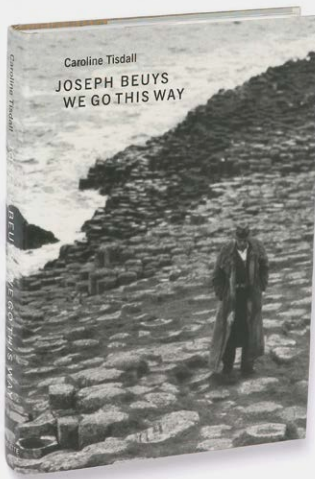
→ www.iittala.com



SMILING IS GOOD FOR YOU

A toothpaste made in Italy specifically for smokers: it removes stains and restores a bright, white smile. Part of the Care collection. There is also a travel size to pair with mouthwashes.

→ www.info.marvis.com



WE GO THIS WAY

A photo book born of the friendship between writer Caroline Tisdall and artist Joseph Beuys. Over 300 photos by Tisdall, many unpublished, accompanied by a text that guides the reader through themes dear to the artist, such as ecology, politics, shamanism, alchemy, botany, and many more.

→ www.violetteeditions.com



SUSTAINABLE SEATING

The OTO chair is made from recycled plastic derived from post-industrial waste. It is easy to assemble and does not require screws or metal inserts. It is produced in a single mould and packaged in recyclable and recycled cellulose pulp packaging.

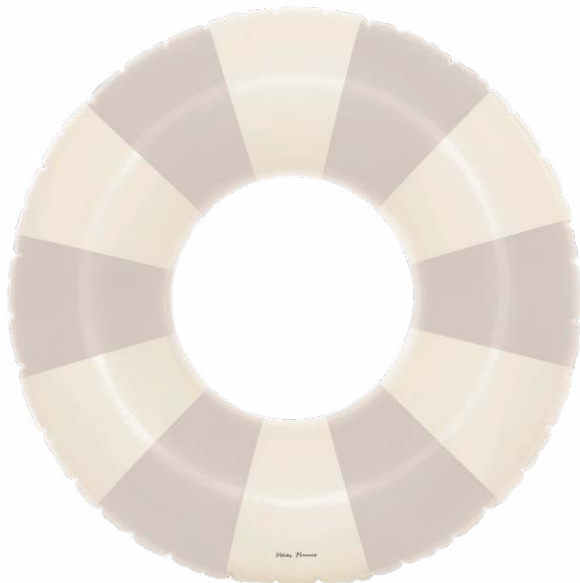
→ www.onetooneobjects.com



A MUST FOR THE SEA

Four colours and three sizes for the swimsuit by Dries van Noten. The Belgian designer's signature is recognisable: chromatic nuances, elegant nature-inspired decoration, classic shape.

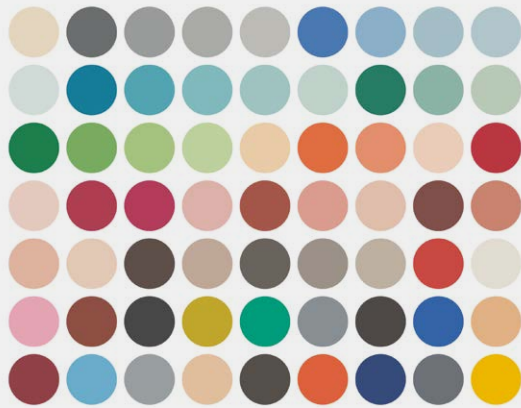
→ www.driesvannoten.com



STRIPES IN WATER

With a shared passion for iconic design, the founders of Petites Pommes, Celine and Anna, launched their first float in Denmark in 2019. This gave rise to a timeless collection of inflatables, with a familiar and simple aesthetic that transcends ever-changing fashions

→ www.petites-pommes.com



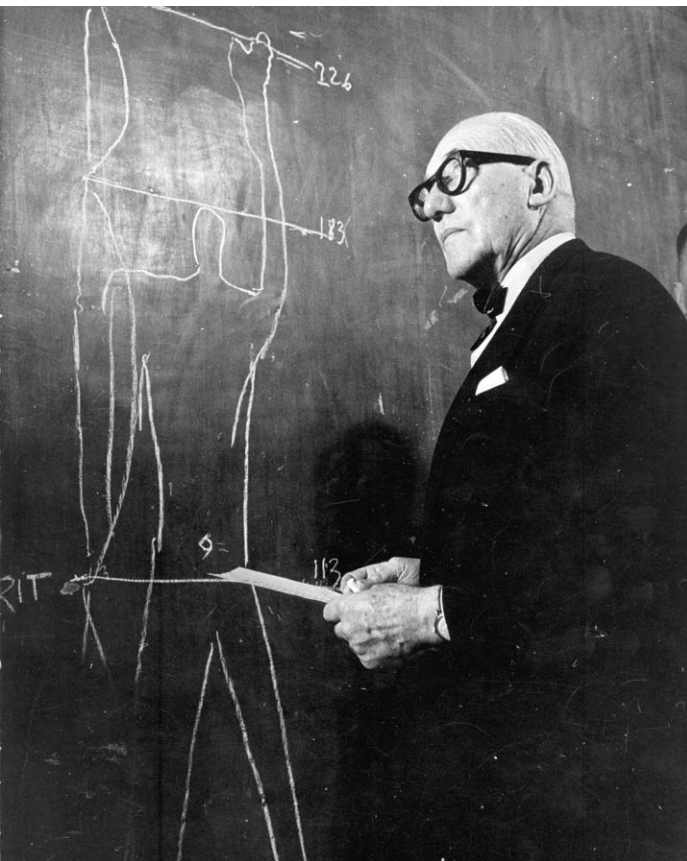
Le Corbusier's Architectural Polychromy



COLOURS ACCORDING TO LE CORBUSIER

Architectural Polychromy is a curated collection of 63 shades developed by the Master in 1931 and 1959, in collaboration with the Swiss wallpaper company Salubra. Shade 32012 corresponds to *Gris Moyen*. For Le Corbusier, greys embody both serenity and detachment. He recommended using darker hues to create depth and background effects, while lighter tones are ideal for crafting softer, more nuanced atmospheres.

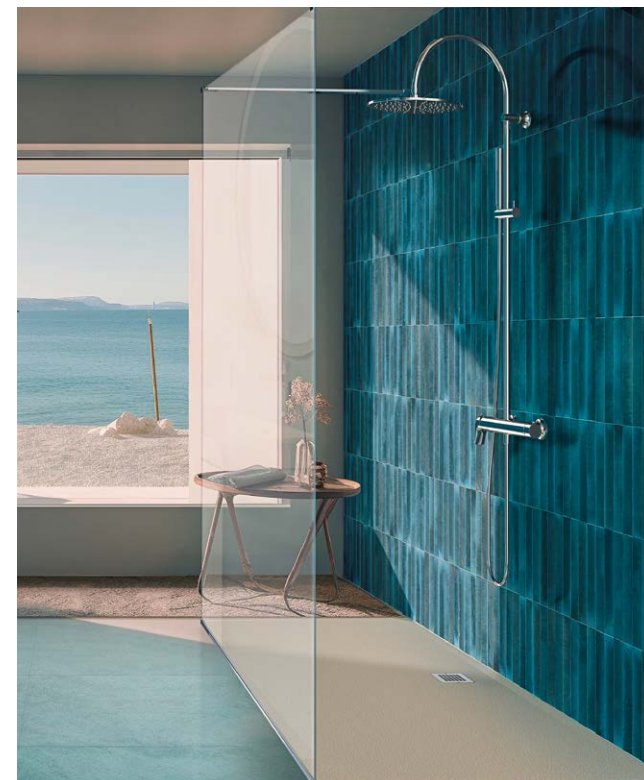
→ www.lescouleurs.ch



© LCS-ADAGP - Prolitteris



The art of *victory*



IDEAL STANDARD BEGAN 2024 ON A HIGH NOTE, EARNING PRESTIGIOUS RED DOT AND IF DESIGN AWARDS FOR THREE COLLECTIONS: *ALU+*, *LA DOLCE VITA®*, AND *SOLOS*. EACH COLLECTION WAS DESIGNED BY THE ESTEEMED ITALIAN STUDIO PALOMBA SERAFINI ASSOCIATI.

Above: The large shower head from the *La Dolce Vita®* collection, complete with *UltraFlat S+* tray in Sand and walk-in shower panel. Left: Large washbasin with tap and towel rail, all from the *La Dolce Vita®* series. *Finesse* basin unit.



reddot winner 2024

“Winning is always important and rarely the result of chance. You can be lucky once, twice, but victories are always the result of collective work.” This phrase, often repeated in sports, highlights the importance of a cohesive and passionate team. How can we not agree? This truth also applies to the world of work, science, and industry. Achievements are seldom the result of one person’s efforts. The Ideal Standard team has embraced this mission, making daily research, experimentation, and innovation its structural goals.

This vision has been rewarded in 2024 with two prestigious awards. In March, the company received the iF Design Award, established in 1954, which requires international entries to be evaluated by an independent jury of experts based on design quality, innovation, functionality, and environmental impact. In May, this was repeated with the 2024 Red Dot Product Award, a globally recognised symbol of design excellence since its inception in 1955. The same three collections were again on the podium: *Alu+*, *La Dolce Vita®*, and *Solos*.

The first to receive the award was *La Dolce Vita®*, a collection that embodies the understated elegance of a relaxed Italian lifestyle. This new series offers comprehensive bathroom solutions, including washbasins, WCs, bidets, bathtubs, mixer taps, shower products, and accessories. *La Dolce Vita®* beautifully balances geometric shapes with inspirations drawn from nature.



Above: Overview of the *La Dolce Vita®* collection, which won the iF Award and Red Dot Award in 2024. The image shows a freestanding bathtub, toilet with *RimLS+®* flushing technology, Altes flush plate, wall-hung bidet, vessel basin on the *Finesse* furniture, and a large square mirror. The mixer taps are all from the *La Dolce Vita®* collection. In the background, an image of Rome.



Above: *Solos*. Detail of the seamless integrated tap and the glossy white basin. Below left: *Solos* shower head with integrated light that changes colour. The hue and brightness of the LED can be customised thanks to the smart technology incorporated, which integrates with any home App. Right: The shower mixer, featuring integrated smart controls and a hand shower, is finished in sleek chrome. This innovative design was honoured with the iF Award and the Red Dot Award in 2024.

Next is *Solos*, which features a unique integrated combination of washbasin and fitting, along with a range of sophisticated shower solutions. The washbasin, characterised by its clean, straight lines and extremely slim edges, achieves a distinctive weightless look, while the elegant integrated tap enhances its pure, seamless appearance. The shower products blend intuitive, intelligent controls with various spray modes and integrated ambient lighting, creating a sophisticated all-in-one solution that delivers a true spa experience.



Together, these three ranges perfectly embody Ideal Standard's *Singular™* philosophy, which aims to provide solutions across all bathroom categories that can be easily mixed and matched. This approach allows customers to create bespoke designs without compromising their vision.

The third award-winning collection is the *Alu+* range of shower products. Prioritising sustainability, *Alu+* is crafted from high-quality aluminium, 84% of which is recycled. The range is entirely chrome- and nickel-free and features water-saving technology that reduces water consumption without compromising comfort. Designed with practicality in mind, *Alu+* includes matching shelves, mirrors, and other storage solutions, making it ideal for smaller spaces. The collection is available in three low-sheen finishes: *Silk Black*, *Rosé* and *Silver*.

Together, these three ranges perfectly embody Ideal Standard's *Singular™* philosophy, which aims to provide solutions across all bathroom categories that can be easily mixed and matched. This approach allows customers to create bespoke designs without compromising their vision. *Singular™* was created to streamline the selection process, fostering creativity and simplifying bathroom design for architects, designers, retailers, merchants and end-users.



Left: The extra-large shower head from the *Alu+* collection in *Silver*. Right: The *Rosé* version of *Alu+*. The hand shower and extra-large rain shower head offer two spray modes: a revitalising rain setting and the soothing *SilkRain* mode, which releases ultra-fine water droplets for a spa-like experience. On the adjacent page: In *Silk Black*, the shower system is made from 84% recycled aluminium. The *Alu+* collection also received the iF Award and the Red Dot Award in 2024.

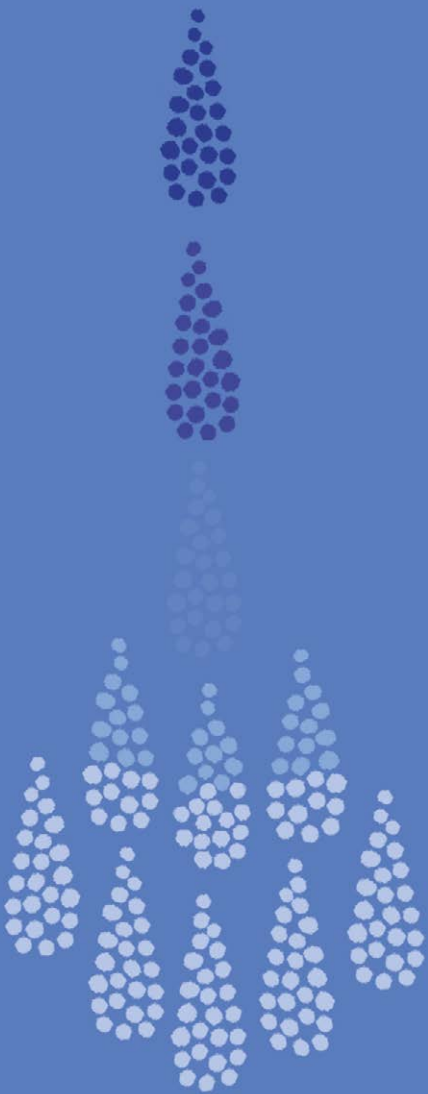


THE FUTURE OF WATER

APPROXIMATELY TWO THIRDS OF THE EARTH'S SURFACE IS COVERED WITH WATER, AND MOST OF THIS IS FOUND IN THE SEAS AND OCEANS. THE WATER CRISIS IS FORCING US TO STUDY SOLUTIONS TO STEM AN INCREASINGLY LIKELY DROUGHT. ALTHOUGH THERE ARE PROS AND CONS TO EACH OF THE PROCESSES FOR DOING SO, SEPARATING SALT FROM SEA WATER IS AN INCREASINGLY POPULAR RESPONSE TO THIS GLOBAL PROBLEM.



At the end of 2020, it became possible, for the first time in history, to trade *Nasdaq Veles California Water Index Futures*, so-called ‘water futures’. During periods of water abundance, the price decreases. According to Nasdaq, putting a price on water is inevitable, because otherwise consumers cannot be protected from fluctuations in its value. Water is an indispensable resource for the survival of mankind and an absolute prerequisite for all life on the planet. Today, one in four people, or two billion people worldwide, lack safe drinking water and adequate sanitation. Global demand for water withdrawals is expected to increase by 55% by 2050 (UN World Water Development Report). Turning salt water into drinking water is one possible solution, and there are many ongoing experiments and research into this.



A BIT OF HISTORY

Man has always endeavoured to collect water, conserve it, purify it and distribute it. This is also why great civilisations often settled near lakes or rivers. Some 7000 years ago, the inhabitants of Jericho designed wells to be used as springs; then aqueducts were built: at first simple grooves in the rock, later transformed into sophisticated piping systems capable of carrying water over vast areas. In Egypt, water was transported through hollowed-out palm trees, while in China and Japan, bamboo canes were used. The Persians discovered underground rivers and lakes, in parallel with the search in other areas for groundwater wells. But it was the Greeks who were among the first to show interest in water quality by using aeration basins for purification and desalination. In his treatise *Meteorologica*, Aristotle (284-322 B.C.) wrote: ‘Salt water when vaporised becomes fresh and subsequent condensation does not produce salt water’. However, it was Chinese pragmatism that set the stage for the use of techniques to separate salt and other impurities: as early as 200 B.C., they were using *Guan-Pu* grass leaves to absorb fresh water, thereby concentrating the brine for food preservation. We have to go as far back as 1800 to find modern sea water desalination techniques in use. The British Royal Navy, thanks to the study of steam-powered ships that could cope with long voyages, obliging them to stockpile supplies of drinking water, realised that the steam plant produced thermal energy - the system at the basis of the simplest industrial desalination technique - and could be used to distil seawater.

HOW TO PRODUCE FRESH WATER

There are numerous techniques used to desalinate water. Each method has its advantages and disadvantages in terms of efficiency, cost and environmental impact. The choice of technique often depends on resources, local needs and energy availability.

Desalination is the process of removing salt to make water drinkable and suitable for domestic, agricultural and industrial purposes, and the reverse osmosis technique is the most widely used to achieve this. As of February 2020, there were 14,360 plants worldwide, about 85% of all existing desalination plants, employing this technique. They are mainly located in three areas of the world: Asia Pacific (APAC), Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and the Americas.

1. Reverse osmosis. The method requires the use of special semi-permeable membranes against which seawater is thrown to be filtered at high pressure to achieve the separation of salt and other impurities, producing drinking water. Osmosis is a widespread molecular phenomenon among all living things. It is a question of balance. In the human body, the semi-permeability of the cell membrane allows water to pass through but not sugars or proteins due to the balance between internal and external cell pressure. It facilitates the exchange between cells, which require nourishment and cleansing, and fluids like lymph and blood that transport nutrients and collect waste for removal or breakdown by organs. In the plant world, the sap spreads throughout the plant thanks to osmosis, which is nothing more than a wonderful, magical pressure balance.
2. Distillation is an ancient practice: boiling seawater produces steam, which is then condensed into fresh water. This process requires a lot of energy and is therefore expensive.
3. Freezing, on the other hand, is a technique that leads to the separation of salt from water: the resulting ice is then melted, and fresh water is obtained. Although it is a natural process, it is less efficient than other techniques and requires high energy consumption.
4. Electrodialysis involves the use of electrically charged membranes to separate salt from water. When seawater passes through these membranes, salt ions are repelled, producing fresh water.

WHERE ARE THE FACILITIES?

In Europe, desalination plants began to be considered from the 1970s onwards, but salt water abstraction capacity has only been growing in earnest since the 1990s. In fact, it has risen from 604,274 m³/day in those years to 10.6 million m³/day in 2019, about 10% of the global desalination capacity. In Europe, the leading nation is Spain, with 765 plants already installed, 1.6 million m³/day and a construction programme of important new facilities to counteract the grave water crisis, especially in the southern part of the country (Andalusia, Melilla, Ceuta, the Canary Islands and the Balearic Islands) and in some large cities such as Barcelona.

In second place is Italy, with the production of around 200,000 m³/day of fresh water. The presence of reverse osmosis desalination plants in the Bel Paese, however, is still subject to severe limitations due to environmental policies and the risks associated with the production of desalination waste.

In the Middle East, the conversion of salt water into fresh water has been the most widely used technology for the drinking water supply for decades. The Saline Water Conversion Corporation (SWCC) in Saudi Arabia currently has the largest global desalination capacity with more than 5.5 million m³ of drinking water produced each day. It is followed by the Abu Dhabi Water and Electricity Authority (ADWEA) and the Dubai Electricity and Water Authority (DEWA) with 3.9 million m³/day and 2.3 million m³/day, respectively. The huge need to extract drinking water from the sea has made the Middle East and, in particular, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) the most active area in this sector. Today, Abu Dhabi, the capital of the UAE, is home to nine desalination plants and produces 4.13 million m³ of drinking water per day, which is then fed into a 14,200 km pipeline network.

Israel deserves special attention with regard to the use, reuse and production of water. Situated among the driest areas on the planet - 60 per cent of the land is desert - thanks to research and expert teams, it has pioneered and fine-tuned the reverse osmosis technique, currently the most competitive in terms of cost and energy benefits. But how much does reverse osmosis desalinated water cost? The cost of desalinated water is around 2-3 euros per cubic metre (one cubic metre corresponds to one thousand litres). A contributing factor to this is the cost of the plants themselves, with the one in Dubai having a construction cost of 3.5 billion euros. In Israel, a family of four spends between \$300 and \$500 per year, which is perfectly sustainable if we consider that we are talking about a decidedly arid area. While more than 80% of Israel's water consumption already comes from desalinated water, the Sorek II project will produce another 200 million cubic metres per year, which when added to the other three plants, Ashkelon, Ashdod and Palmachim, will reach a total of 900 million cubic metres per year, covering 90% of the national water demand.

WEAKNESSES

Despite its obvious benefits, desalination is not without its challenges and critical issues. The main problems include high energy costs as well as environmental concerns related to the discharge of residual salt concentrates into the marine environment. Furthermore, access to desalinated drinking water can become an issue of equity and social justice, as the associated costs can be prohibitive for some individuals or communities. However, as technologies advance and challenges to freshwater availability become more acute, desalination will continue to be an important component of global water security. Investments in research and development are crucial to make this process more efficient, affordable and sustainable in the long term.

Illustrations:
VALERIA PETRONE

THE IMAGE & ITS DOUBLE

EVERY DAY WE SEEK OUR REFLECTED IMAGE, THAT HERE AND NOW THAT GIVES US A MOMENT OF OURSELVES OR RATHER, OF OUR IMAGE, AND PERHAPS OUR IDENTITY. WITH CAREFUL AESTHETIC RESEARCH AND A TOUCH OF IRONY, WE HAVE SELECTED COLLECTIBLE MIRRORS AND FUNCTIONAL OBJECTS TO SUGGEST FURNISHINGS THAT LIVE EVEN WITHOUT OUR PRESENCE.

Reflecting in Art

To Breathe – Constellation is a mirrored floor that covers the entire central surface of the Bourse in Paris, reflecting the surrounding architecture renovated by Tadao Ando and the original dome. The boundaries blur, and the sky seems to dissolve into the glass dome, reshaping our perception of space and challenging our sense of bodily gravitation. The installation is part of the exhibition "Le monde comme il va" by South Korean conceptual artist Kimsooja, who commented: "I'd like to create works that are like water and air, that cannot be owned but can be shared with everyone."

→ www.pinaultcollection.com/en/boursedecommerce



Smoke Mirror

Maarten Baas's creative process involves a cycle of destruction and preservation. He first burns parts of antique furniture, then preserves them with a transparent epoxy resin coating, crystallising their appearance forever. This results in unique objects with a history.

→ www.rossanaorlandi.com



The Artist's Hand

With their Baroque influences, Venetian mirrors are still a triumph of curves, scrolls, and crystal details, whose transparency and brilliance intelligently cover the frame and raw edges of the glass. Pictured: *Fleur* Venetian by Ongaro e Fuga. H 100, W 65 cm (customisable sizes and colours).

→ www.ongaroefuga.com



A French Touch

The mineral base is made of saline rock and acrylic, a solid, lightweight, water-based, and solvent-free material. Handcrafted pieces may differ slightly from the image shown.

→ www.studiorosaroom.com



Handbag-Sized

Everyone knows Van Cleef & Arpels for their expertise in jewellery and watchmaking, but since 1906 they have also distinguished themselves in creating exceptional objects and automaton: table clocks, combs, powder cases, or handbag mirrors, unique creations destined for everyday use.

→ www.vancleefarpels.com



Passe-partout

Art Wood Frame features strict lines, rounded shapes, and a matte finish. Framed with a black lacquered edge, it is highlighted by the prominent, almost austere border, suitable for all environments. Designed by Piero Lissoni for DePadova.

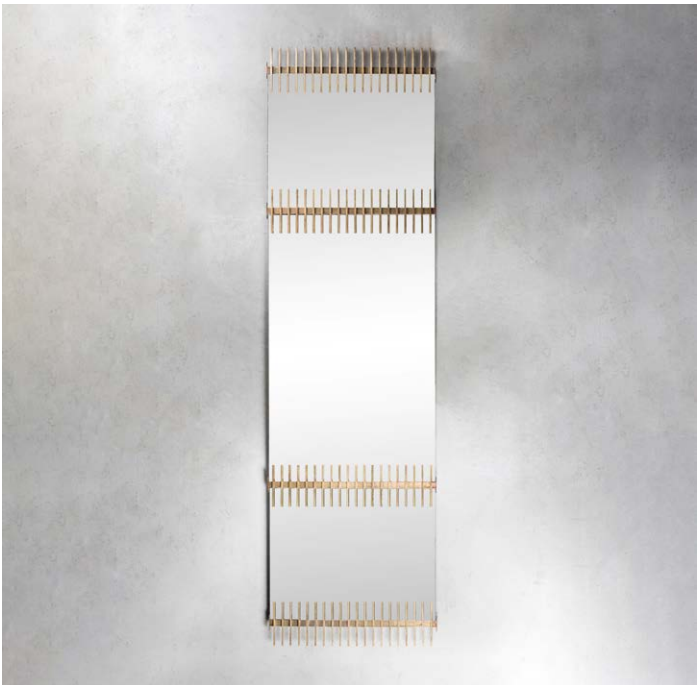
→ www.depadova.com



Real and Imaginary

Drawing n° 13 by Ron Gilad is a mirror within a rectangular frame that contains the image of a drawn room. A play of references, paradoxes, and a sense of absurdity that liberates the imagination. An ironic taste for the reversal of meanings.

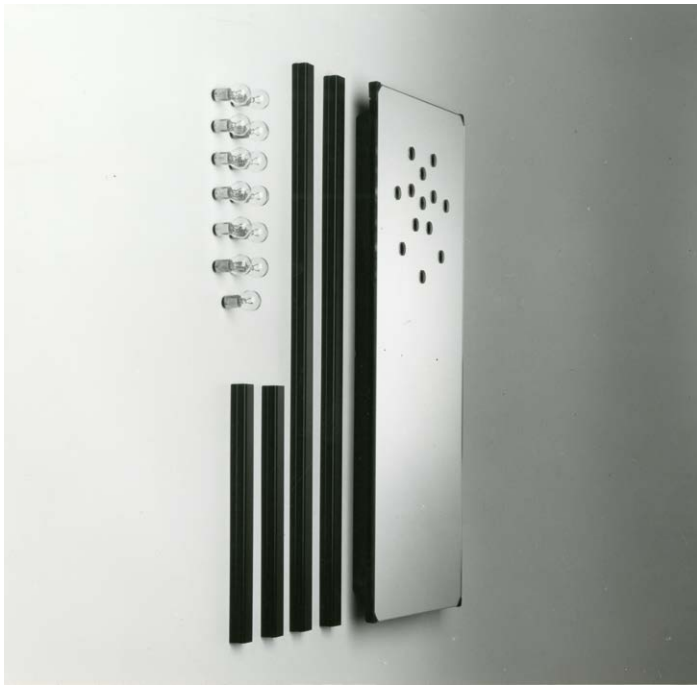
→ www.danese milano.com



A Collector's Piece

Ettore Sottsass's experimentation is well known. It often led to a fusion of traditional forms and more experimental styles, creating something completely new, like this piece made for a Roman home. In brass and smoked crystal (Italy, 1958).

→ www.nilufar.com



The Power of Ideas

Designed by Achille Castiglioni in 1971 for the Milanese restaurant "Da Lino," the mirror only became part of Kartell's production in 1977 (Courtesy of Fondazione Achille Castiglioni). Suitable for both horizontal and vertical positions, it holds 13 light bulbs.

→ www.fondazioneachillecastiglioni.it

Mysterious Mirrors

Untitled Views (2014) are works by the artists Goldschmied & Chiari that artificially recreate natural environments. These unique surfaces, resembling natural, internal, or mental landscapes, are produced by printing photographic images with a technique that renders the surface reflective. This allows viewers to see themselves in the artwork, making them an integral part of the piece and completing it with their own reflected image.



Photo: Titia Hahne

Optical Effects

Sabine Marcelis and Brit van Nerven collaborated on the Seeing Glass project, a series of glass objects resulting from continuous study of the optical effects created with glass. The *Off Round Hue* collection mirrors are coloured mirrors with organic shapes available exclusively at Etage Projects. The *Hue* collection, commissioned by Etage Projects, is available in seven colours: black, bronze, pink, dawn, green (pictured), aubergine, gold, and blue.

→ www.etageprojects.com/artists/sabine-marcelis



Domestic Architecture

Ren, the collection by Neri & Hu, reflects the image but completes itself by creating versatile objects: from vanity units to coat racks, from hanging solutions to floor-standing ones. Pictured is the table mirror. By Poltrona Frau.

→ www.poltronafrau.com



Vintage Elegance

Designer Davide Oppizzi was inspired by actress Audrey Hepburn, who in the 1960s embodied a new aesthetic: slender figure, refined face, doe eyes. These floor or wall mirrors have a frame in 6 mm fused glass, back painted with semi-transparent colours. The LED backlighting system is integrated into the structure.

→ www.fiamitalia.it/en/mirrors



Reflective Sculptures

Orb is part of Caroline Chao's View collection. All pieces in the series create different relationships and images every time they are observed: the colours change with the movement of the sun, the reflections reduce or multiply depending on the point of view, and the furnishings produce an optical effect that shifts or distorts the reflection in an unexpected way.

→ www.carolinechao.com



Masking

Boès celebrates Sardinia and its most iconic traditions. The bull's head recalls the masks of the Ottana carnival, representing the confrontation between man and nature, between instinct and reason. The underlying idea, in a play of references laced with irony, is that by looking in the mirror, one masks oneself as a boès, becoming an animal for just a moment. The mirror is also a valet tray, with spaces for phones, leashes, umbrellas, or wallets. By Giulio Lacchetti for Ebanisteria Meccanica

→ www.ebanisteriameccanica.com

Illuminate Your Reflection

The round *Conca* mirror (65 cm) by Ideal Standard has a brown-black frame. The integrated LED light illuminates the surface evenly, enhancing both functionality and style. Pictured with the Joy wall-mounted mixer tap in Silver Storm.

→ www.idealstandard.com



Like a Book

Designed by Edward Barber & Jay Osgerby, *Como* is available in two versions: one with a single panel and the other with three panels linked together by hinge pins. The central panel is fixed to the wall, while the side panels rotate to remain partially or fully open. When closed, the mirrors reveal their elegantly finished back in matte lacquered crystal. By Glass Italia.

→ www.glasitalia.com



PROFESSIONAL PIANISTS AND CONCERT PERFORMERS, GIACOMO AND YIN, LOVE TO TRAVEL AND SHARE THE KNOWLEDGE AND TRADITIONS THEY ENCOUNTER DURING THEIR TOURS.



The night brings *sweet* advice

THEY DO THIS THROUGH MUSIC AND TEACHING AND, FOR THE PAST YEAR, THROUGH NAËVE:
A SMALL PASTRY SHOP IN THE HEART OF MILAN.

How often do we find that the best ideas come after a short nap? Yes, after just a few minutes of sleep. Studies conducted by researchers at Sorbonne University, Institut du Cerveau in Paris, have confirmed that stage one of sleep is a hybrid “semi-lucid” state. At this moment, logical thinking can intercept the creative sparks that can clearly reach our brain and lead to the creation of innovative projects. Einstein did the same, waking up to develop new thoughts – he reportedly loved to rest in an armchair with a spoon in his hand: when his muscles relaxed, the spoon fell, he woke up, and his brain was activated. The birth of *Naëve* happened this way. Giacomo Scinardo and his wife Yin Zheng, between feedings – their baby Zayn had just been born – had the idea to open a pastry shop, a place to share their passion for the sweets they had tasted during their tours around the world. He Sicilian, she Chinese, they met in America, in Richmond, Virginia. Both professional pianists and concert performers – Giacomo, amidst numerous commitments and teaching at the Brescia Conservatory, has played at venues including Sala Verdi

in Milan; Yin is an Associate Professor of Piano at Virginia Commonwealth University and gives international concerts – they are two exuberant minds with a love for culture in the broadest sense. As Piero Camporesi, the Italian historian, anthropologist, and gastronome, wrote, the Latin verb “coleo” – to cultivate – is the etymological basis of both cultivation and culture. And for them, it is exactly so. They know that behind a simple recipe lie traditions, rituals, raw materials, dietary habits, encounters between different worlds, and memories. “I believe that the history of peoples and the knowledge belonging to each civilisation,” says Yin, “can be transmitted through different media. For us, music is a continuous source of research and in-depth study, a reason for study and professional achievement, but also tasting a slice of cake, following a recipe is a guide that accompanies us to the discovery of different worlds, to know and appreciate. Discovering new foods is our compass when we arrive in a new place.” The philosophy that accompanies Giacomo and Yin is well summarised on the patisserie’s website. The hostess is an imaginary figure, Evelyn, their alter ego.



Photo: Davide Galli

Previous page: New York cheesecake. *Naëve*'s offerings are like culinary postcards from across the globe, each representing a distinct food culture. Above: A view of *Naëve*'s patisserie in Milan. With meticulous attention to detail and thoughtfully chosen colour schemes, it provides a serene retreat for those who value quality, even during their coffee break.



Photo: Renata Vesely



Top: A slice of Sicilian cassata, served with a rose petal milk drink. Bottom: A Japanese delicacy - matcha mille crêpes, a house speciality, paired with a refreshing matcha milk.



Photo: Renata Vesely

"We chose this name because it perfectly interprets our lifestyle: open, curious, dreamy, and why not, also naive in the sense of purity. We believe in culture as a system to bring people together, overcome barriers, and engage people with beauty."

"...Immensely elegant, she has porcelain skin that frames her brown hair. Daughter of an influential ambassador and a renowned pianist, her childhood was a mix of cultures, having lived in the Middle East, Asia, and Western Europe. A writer and adventurer, Evelyn is dedicated to exploring the world through the pages of her books and drawing inspiration from exotic journeys based on her vast knowledge. Since she was a child, she has been fascinated by cooking, art, and travel, spending her adolescence immersed in Flemish Renaissance painting, exploring the rituals of Japanese Kaiseki cuisine, and venturing into the sensory richness of Indian spices. Her personality is unique, characterised by a perceptive spirit and a hypnotic charm. She wears a Fedora hat and colours her lips bright red. In her pastry shop, Evelyn will take you around the world on a unique sensory journey full of continuous surprises."

A poetic but absolutely precise presentation that is consistently confirmed once you cross the threshold of the refined Milanese pastry shop. The kitchen is led by Alessio Gavazzi, a pastry chef trained in Milan at the Four Seasons Hotel and the Hotel Principe di Savoia first, and then at the culinary temples of Peck and Emporio Armani. Alessio transforms each creation into a unique masterpiece that blends tradition and modernity.

Thus, the menu includes chocolate and hazelnut babka, a leavened bread of Eastern European origin, Japanese soufflé cake with a flan-like consistency, Caprese cake, a dessert born in Capri in 1920, the famous madeleines cited by Proust, the Viennese Sachertorte, green tea mille crepe, Sicilian cassata, to name just a few preparations. As Giacomo and Yin say, "each offering is like a postcard sent by Evelyn always travelling around the world." And it is they who describe their activity as "On a journey" and have chosen Milan to raise their son Zayn and open Naëve. "We are in Milan today," says Giacomo, "because this is the most multicultural city in Italy. Here there is curiosity towards other traditions, although we have still encountered some scepticism – people often ask why we don't offer jam croissants like all the other places," they say, laughing. "And then it's easy to travel."

Naëve poetically means naive. "We chose this name because it perfectly interprets our lifestyle: open, curious, dreamy, and why not, also naive in the sense of purity. We believe in culture as a system to bring people together, overcome barriers, and engage people with beauty", says Giacomo. Always riding the wave of passion and creativity, Giacomo and Yin also created the non-profit cultural association Artópia, which promotes cultural exchange between artists and aims to raise awareness and cross-fertilise different cultures. The first project that saw the light in 2019 is a music festival: the Sicily International Piano and Voice Festival, which, through two competitions included in the event, aims to encourage and discover new talents. It is held in Noto in the summer, and this year they are proud to announce that students, teachers, and guests from more than 26 nations will be represented. There's nothing left to do but try their sweets and wait for new initiatives. Stay tuned, as they say today.

www.naevemilano.com



Above: Yin Zheng and Giacomo Scinaro in concert. Both professional pianists are united by their passion for music, their love of travel, and their curiosity about global culinary traditions. Left: Freshly baked *cannelés* - small cylindrical cakes with a rum and vanilla aroma and a custard filling, encased in a caramelised crust. Hailing from the Bordeaux region of France, these treats are believed to date back to the 15th century. Next page: The front view of the Naëve dessert counter at Via della Moscova 51, Milan.



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