

DESIGN IN CONTEXT

Products where design blurs the lines between art and functionality

Text **TINA THAKRAR**

NAME AND FAME

At 100% Design in London this year, British manufacturer Liqui Contracts was the topic of conversation for the launch of 13 new products in a handmade wooden pavilion inspired by trees. The products all came with interesting names inspired from renowned creative and scientific artists - the Moore chair and stool from English astronomer Patrick Moore; Shaw shelving units and tables from Irish playwright and author George Bernard Shaw; and Margot pendant from English ballerina Margot Fonteyn. The collection marked Liqui Contracts' desire to create honest, well-made, aesthetic and functional pieces.

IMAGE: CRATE47

COSMIC QUALITIES

Designer Lara Bohinc has always been fascinated with astronomic forms, and her Orbit, Fortress and Collision collections of furniture and art objects are proof of that. Her latest move under Bohinc Studio is the Planeteria range of furniture and accessories. Three chairs, two pouffes, a loveseat, and a console form part of the Saturn and Apollo sub-series, besides a new Planeteria lighting range. Her signature feminine, geometric style merges with a strong metalworking technique employed in small artisanal workshops in Italy and Portugal.



IMAGES: PHILIPPE FRAGNIERE



WOOD JUMBLE

Donna Wilson's limited-edition Abstract Assembly collection of furniture is like a real-life adaptation of her watercolour paintings. The sculptural pieces – a bench, three chairs and four mirrors – have been made in collaboration of SCP and have been painted in different colours to make each one unique. The pieces have been carved out of oak and beech offcuts, with primary use of Douglas Fir. Although entirely abstract, the pieces have been put together using traditional handcrafting techniques.



A FRIEND IN FURNITURE

Ever thought of your furniture as companions? We hadn't, until we met Formae, and were introduced to their Roommate collection. Formae has a strong Italian history, and this comes through loud and clear in this modular collection that is Italian manufacturing and handcrafted design at its best. The pieces are designed as discreet roommates, who stand in a corner, and offer practical solutions to your daily routine. They're all based on certain common principles of architectural detailing, the influence of the botanical world, day-to-day rituals and the infinite creativity of geometries. The range includes coat racks, clocks, shelves, bookends and hooks.





CABBAGE PATCH

Veggie Lights by London-based Nir Meiri and Pune-based Vaidehi Thakkar is a set of table lamps made from red cabbage. Introduced at the London Design Festival this year, these lamps have been crafted by Meiri from Thakkar's Fiber Flats - red cabbage leaves that are first soaked in water based adhesives, treated to obtain anti-fungal properties, moulded into shape and then dried. The resultant sheets are ultra-thin, beautifully veined and translucent, making them perfect for the play of light and shadow with lamps. Meiri then designed the lamp to resemble the silhouette of a cabbage.



IMAGE: MAXWELL ANDERSON X2, GUY ARCHARD X2

WASTE-RRAZZO

Cut back to 20 centuries ago, when the Romans used marble shards and broken pottery pieces to make floors and pavements. The use of these chips then progressed to furniture, until marble took precedence. In recent times though, this wondrous material called terrazzo has been called into prominence again, by designers and users looking for cost-effective, sustainable and long-standing materials. In response to this, designer Robin Grasby has recently launched Altrock, a surface material crafted from 87% recycled marble in the form of flour, chips, an even slabs. The pieces are held together by resin and then coated with wax oil, making them resistant enough to be used for furniture, wall coverings and surfaces.

