

DAMN^o 47

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

A MAGAZINE ON CONTEMPORARY CULTURE

10 yrs
DAMN^o

*Meanwhile
at the office...*

Ai Weiwei /
Ólafur Eliasson /
Abäke /
Nacho Carbonell /
René Heyvaert /
Martin Mostböck /
Cristián Valdés /
Álvaro Siza /
Industrial Facility /

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106 / 40 x 40 *The crafting of waste*

text PATRIZIA COGGIOLA

Italian designers Paolo Ulian and Moreno Ratti began collaborating about a year ago. Their favourite material is Carrara marble. But the key to their ingenuity is the use of discarded marble tiles in the design of all sorts of household objects. By employing the latest technology, they are able to achieve simplicity of form, concentrating on gesture to achieve minimal purity.

Piet fruit bowl, by Paolo Ulian and Moreno Ratti



AT THE OFFICE / 108

A space for communicative solutions

text PATRIZIA COGGIOLA

Until about a decade ago, office furniture was strictly functional. And then, quite suddenly, office design was flooded by home-office trends, in a desperate attempt to restore a sense of warmth to the atmosphere. It is only now that the industry has come to realise that the solution lies in a synthesis of the two. DAMN° takes a look at the new components being developed for working environments, with ergonomic, acoustic, and visual concerns in mind.

großgestalten office

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Following the medieval lines, vorman's scenography for DAMN°'s exhibition at the Broel Tower. Photo: Sven Everaert

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A Manifesto by Industrial Facility

Kim Colin and Sam Hecht,

Founding partners of London design office Industrial Facility

Photo © Gerhardt Kellerman



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COVER IMAGE

Untitled, 1974
 From René Heyvaert's portfolio
 Acrylic on paper

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PUBLIC Office Landscape, designed by Yves Béhar and fuseproject for Herman Miller

The **Social Chair** is the core component of the PUBLIC system. It brings a new level of ergonomics and functionality to soft seating, by accommodating a range of people and postures at work.



YVES BÉHAR (FUSEPROJECT)

Designer for Herman Miller

Herman Miller's Living Office takes a different approach to managing people and their work, as well as the tools and products that enable that work and the places where people come together to do it. Together with Yves Béhar's fuseproject, Sam Hecht and Kim Colin (Industrial Facility), and Studio 7.5, Herman Miller is expanding its offering of human-centred elements, to create a total work experience that is more natural and desirable, and within it, the opportunity for individuals and organisations to achieve a new dynamic of shared prosperity.

"I began thinking about the need for casual, collaborative office seating three years ago, when I was at Orgatec in Cologne. I was walking along with Don Goeman, Herman Miller's Executive Vice President of Research and Design, when he stopped to point-out a sofa made from large blocks of foam. It seemed that the designer had thought: big chunks of foam say comfort! A year later, when Herman Miller asked me and my team at fuseproject to develop a more effective, collaborative office environment, I saw an opportunity to go beyond the superficial approach to social seating. I wanted to create a design that would support a more flexible, fluid way of working, while addressing the very human need



for interaction. This led to our concept of 'social desk-ing': individual and group spaces that allow collaboration in proximity, and interstitial spaces as solutions for converting the spaces in-between into community spaces for casual interaction. This system of shared surfaces would be inviting to guests, have no implied hierarchy, and would offer collaborative zones spread evenly across the floor plan. The idea of integrated spaces for casual meetings went against the traditional thinking that individual and social work-habits need to be separated. We believe that collaboration doesn't just happen in conference rooms, it happens everywhere."

The result is Public Office Landscape, a system that boasts an ideal state of flow in the office, with seating elements that merge into desks, and soft fabrics that meld into hard surfaces, encouraging easy exchanges between people. "There is no technical reason why offices are needed today. In theory, we could all be working from home, remotely checking-in when needed. The reason why people still want to go to an office is to collaborate with others. PUBLIC Office Landscape addresses collaboration, not as moments, but as movement."

hermanmiller.com
fuseproject.com



HERMAN MILLER

Industrial Facility

Locale is a new office system designed by Sam Hecht & Kim Colin (Industrial Facility) for Herman Miller. This collection addresses anew the spatial quality of the office space. Cantilevered tables free the floor plate from unnecessary furniture legs, remove obstacles for easy movement, and encourage spontaneous collaboration.

hermanmiller.com
industrialfacility.co.uk

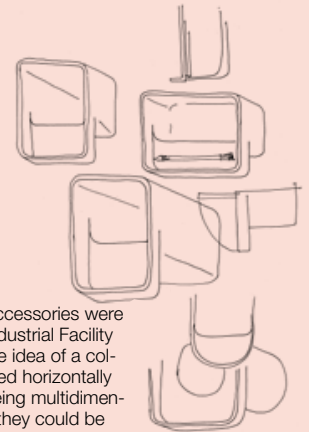


HERMAN MILLER

Industrial Facility

Herman Miller's **Formwork** modular desk accessories were designed by Sam Hecht and Kim Colin of Industrial Facility design studio. Hecht and Colin promoted the idea of a collection of simple boxes that could be arranged horizontally or stacked vertically, with each accessory being multidimensional and multifunctional as regards where they could be used and what they could contain, allowing for a hierarchy of usefulness. Several of the accessories have cantilevered surfaces that serve as a tray, helping to define a type of hierarchical organisation – instead of digging around for a USB stick, this item can be stored at a higher level.

hermanmiller.com



GIULIO IACCHETTI

Designer

Collectors' design is abundantly populated by vintage office pieces. For those who know how and where to dig, these can be found in galleries or in online auctions. The Italian designer Giulio Iacchetti is an enthusiastic 'searcher' recently affected by the office furniture edited in the 1960s by Olivetti, taking a historical view of the work environment that still has some contemporary meaning.

"Time is the only factor that determines the value of things (and people). It has been almost 50 years since the design of this office system by BBPR, a project that went far beyond the simple work plan shown in the image. I believe its value is not only intact, but I would say it has grown over time. From that project, I take the following elements: sincerity, reduction to the essential, a choice of unconventional colours, comparing them to a harmonic vision of dedicated workspaces designed with consistency and integrity. It's Olivetti, and there is little to add: an ideal set-up, from the architecture to the internal furnishings. (Olivetti commercialised office furniture as well as typewriters). In my profession, I always project toward the future, peering and drawing things that do not yet exist; I need a back office of settled, consolidated things."

giulioiacchetti.com
olivetti.com

Olivetti office desk, designed by BBPR (Banfi, Belgiojoso, Peressutti & Rogers), circa 1960

CAPPELLINI

Jasper Morrison

In October 2014, Cappellini participated in the Orgatec trade fair with pieces from a selection of its most renowned icons, like Jasper Morrison's **Lotus** chair (2006) and **Simplon** table (2003), made of an aluminium honeycomb composite and solid aluminium.

cappellini.it





STEFAN DIEZ

Designer for Hay

During the last Orgatec fair, Hay made a quite impressive impact. The presentation of a large installation, New Order, is dedicated to just that, by way of a fully articulated office system. Hay had initially presented this shelving and storage system primarily with a domestic environment in mind. Now, in introducing a range of extensions dedicated to working spaces, a contemporary solution for the workspace has been revealed, fitting the needs of the younger generation. "Times are changing, and so is the way we store our lives. Rather than stacks of paper and rows of ring binders, we now keep our information in digital clouds, neatly organised alongside thousands of photos, songs, and films. The digital age had an impact beyond the area it revolutionised, including on our relationship to architecture and furniture. Boundaries keep on blurring, embracing the on-going revolution in our everyday lives, thanks to the continual miniaturisation of digital devices and a powerful global data infrastructure." New Order's potential in the world of workspaces comes in the form of shared units in multiple heights, from desk level up to standing level, "making it a high-precision product with exceptional properties that provides an impressive degree of versatility."

hay.dk

stefan-diez.com

New Order

Stefan Diez © Robert Fischer



LOCALE

Industrial Facility

With **Locale**, the intelligent office furniture system designed by Sam Hecht and Kim Colin (Industrial Facility), Herman Miller allows for different gradients of focused work and collaboration to take place. These highly adjustable elements can be composed to encourage the free and intuitive shift from individual work to collaborative and social activities, with the subtle curvature of Locale's surfaces signalling openness and inviting interaction; people move and change positions naturally. As a result, the workplace becomes energetic and the people thrive.

hermanmiller.com

industrialfacility.co.uk



MAGIS

Anderssen & Voll

Tibu, designed by Anderssen & Voll, is a new swivel bar stool by Magis that is adjustable in height by way of a gas piston. However, the stool is also available in two fixed height versions.

magisdesign.com

anderssen-voll.com



Face-to-Face Collaboration

A Manifesto by Industrial Facility

Good business depends on a company's ability to recognise good ideas and implement them. More often than not, good ideas come from within, and we now understand 'collaboration' as a key mechanism in obtaining these. Collaboration is the creative act of spontaneously sharing and developing new ideas among individuals working together. But if good ideas are what organisations want, and collaboration elicits them, it becomes clear that when the office floor-plate is separated into zones for workstations, private offices, and meeting spaces, people find it very difficult to act spontaneously. Creative impulses do not necessarily happen between the hours of nine and five, and in specific rooms – the idea of scheduling a meeting is diametrically opposed to the very nature of collaboration. It needs space to breathe, and it needs to occur at the very heart of conversations, wherever they take place, in a natural manner. Face-to-face collaboration is key to productivity, despite the proliferation of technology that would lead us to think otherwise.

Even for people who ostensibly work side by side, it can be difficult to share and engage. If we accept this, then we might begin to more honestly shape an atmosphere that encourages interaction. It might resemble constructive chaos. Seeing collaboration as spontaneous and totally improvisational, we understand that it needs specialised conditions to thrive. To borrow from the jazz quartet or rock band analogy, the success of improvisation hinges on the ability of the participants to trust one another, to listen, to anticipate, and ultimately, to abandon themselves completely to the creative act and to each other.



Industrial Facility was formed by Sam Hecht and Kim Colin in London in 2002. Its purpose: to investigate and contextualise objects, and reveal their potential for progress. Their clients include Herman Miller (US), for which the Locale office furniture system was developed; Muji (Japan); Mattiazzi (Italy); Geneva (Switzerland); and Novo Nordisk (Denmark). Hecht and Colin taught design platforms at the Royal College of Art in industrial design and in architecture, and Hecht was a Visiting Professor at HfG Karlsruhe (Germany). In 2009, Hecht became a Royal Designer for Industry and was nominated for the Prince Philip Prize. In 2014, Industrial Facility received its fifth iF Gold Award in Hannover, and an IDEA Gold Award for Locale. In 2011, the practice won the Brit Insurance Design of the Year Award for Furniture. Most major permanent design collections contain their work, including the SFMoMA; MoMA; V&A; Art Institute of Chicago; and Helsinki Museum.

industrialfacility.co.uk

Kim Colin and Sam Hecht,
founding partners of London design
office Industrial Facility
Photo © Gerhardt Kellerman

Locale is a new office system designed
by Industrial Facility for Herman Miller
Photo © Herman Miller, Locale

We begin to make better sense of the office by imagining it as a series of neighbourhoods. Each locale has its own character, its own attractions, and even a kind of ecosystem of relationships. The composition of people and furniture allows for natural connections and cross-pollination, and the open plan is finally 'open', removing obstacles to the kind of rich variation, personalisation, and diversity that make a real city neighbourhood so vibrant. Organisations must ask themselves whether the point of work is simply to do work. For the creative leaders organisations want and need, just 'doing work' is no longer enough. For responsible and motivated people today, work is merely the side effect of having real purpose. <

