



PRESS RELEASE

Brussels Design September

Kanal – Centre Pompidou / Between Art and Design. The Belgian scene.

On the occasion of the thirteenth edition of Brussels Design September, we are delighted to present the exhibition 'Between Art and Design. The Belgian scene'.

This subjective selection focuses on a specific niche in the design sector, that of 'collectible design' or 'design art'. Limited series and unique pieces, sometimes hand-made, form the core of this exhibition, in which form takes precedence over function, which is relegated to the background.

The selection includes objects in the grey zone between art and design, mainly pieces of furniture with a monumental allure. The various pieces exhibited testify to the eclecticism and influence of Belgian creativity.

This exhibition highlights the importance of the questions that Belgian designers have around the choice of form and function in designs.

The tension between these two fundamental aspects of design was a key element in the selection of the items for the show. Function often plays an invisible role so that our focus is drawn exclusively to the form of an object. This tension also comes up in the research into and experiments in the techniques and materials used. The result is always a very personal design language. Noble materials such as marble, natural stone, wood, bronze or copper, are fashioned with respect and they define the appearance of the object.

The common demands of any piece of furniture (function, comfort and ergonomics) are not given priority here. The objects are no longer reduced to function alone, they are unconventional and anarchic; they invite interaction.

Artists have, for a long time, inspired designers and the line between designer objects and works of art is becoming increasingly blurred.

Salvador Dali designed his legendary Bocca sofa in the 1930s. In Belgium, we discover how Emile Veranneman and Pieter De Bruyne distanced themselves from stereotypical furniture in the 60s.

We had to wait until the beginning of the 80s however to see any real impact of art on design when the Memphis movement shocked the public in Milan with expressive, multi-coloured and often kitsch furniture.

From then on - also in Belgium - a younger generation of designers started creating a new design language.

From an artistic point of view, the design movement peaked in the 90s but did not have the desired success with the general public despite the efforts made by a number of design boutiques and art galleries that were to play a pioneering role here.

A further 20 years were needed before wider support was generated. Since then design has become an everyday feature of our lives and exclusive design objects today draw considerable interest.

'Between Art & Design, The Belgian scene.' This exhibition provides an overview of iconic, unique and often playful pieces. It offers us an ensemble that reflects the wealth and particularly the diversity of

contemporary Belgian design. In this selection, the most striking aspect is the great artistic diversity that is also a strong characteristic of the world of visual arts in Belgium. The designers adopt a very independent and individual presentation style. They experiment with various techniques and materials and are consequently involved in the production process.

But diversity is not just the result of an unusual choice of materials, technique or design language. It is also about people's perception of an object. It may surprise, disturb or even amuse.

Belgian designers remain, with a few exceptions, discreet; their work is characterised by a feeling for aesthetics, volume and proportion.

Practical information

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