

**MANIERA
AT DESIGN MIAMI/BASEL**

Limited edition furniture by
OFFICE KERSTEN GEERS DAVID VAN SEVEREN
STUDIO ANNE HOLTROP
CHRISTOPH HEFTI
RICHARD VENLET
6A ARCHITECTS
Booth C04

“THE DIFFICULT DUO”

An installation by
OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen
& Richard Venlet

15 – 21 June
2015

MANIERA I

About MANIERA

Limited edition furniture by architects and artists

The idea is simple: since architects often have a close relationship with the visual arts, and artists are often inspired by the spatial environment, architecture or design, the Brussels-based design initiative MANIERA attempts to crystallize these proximities into new design proposals. In this manner MANIERA functions as a laboratory where architects and artists can transcend their own medium by producing limited edition furniture series.

MANIERA Series

MANIERA invites architects and artists who are inspired by the built environment to design series or small collections of limited edition furniture. Each series has a clear concept and consists of 4 to 8 pieces. Due to its designers' architectural way of thinking, characterized by a clear awareness of space, MANIERA furniture is truly architectonic. The architecture-driven design pieces take their place without having to enter into any architectonic negotiations. The architects and artists invited approach the commission from very different angles. MANIERA develops prototypes in close collaboration with them and then has the furniture produced in local workshops by skilled craftsmen.

MANIERA Interludes

Parallel to its series of commissioned furniture, MANIERA offers a platform to artists from a multiplicity of disciplines who successfully branch out into furniture or interior design. The 'MANIERA Interludes' showcase cross-disciplinary work by highly versatile and multifaceted artists who translate their personal language and writing into idiosyncratic design objects.

Above all, MANIERA wants to bring a young, up-and-coming generation of architects and artists to the fore, but it also wants to show established and renowned figures in a new way. Rather than white-box presentations, MANIERA presents the furniture in various domestic surroundings, in existing interiors. More than just a showcase of design furniture, the MANIERA exhibitions give an excuse to examine the formal language and conceptual mode of thought, or 'maniera', of the architects and artists invited.

Curio

" THE DIFFICULT DUO "

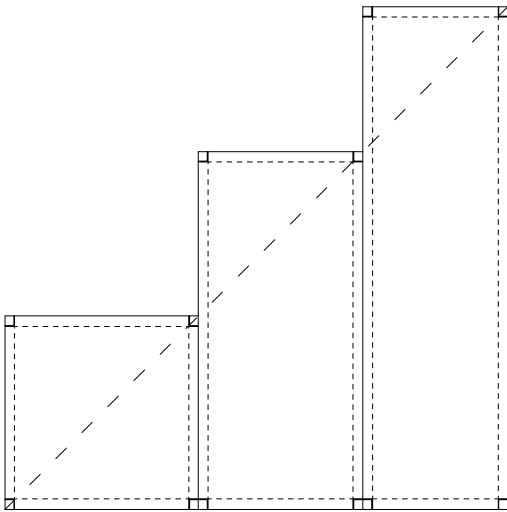
An installation by OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen & Richard Venlet



For Design Miami / Basel's Design Curio programme, MANIERA commissioned OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen and Richard Venlet to conceive an architectural installation. Inspired by the diminutive space in a Design Curio booth, the architects and artist decided to deprive space of space. They designed two narrow, consecutive corridor-like rooms that are connected through a door. The visitor is invited to walk from one room to the other and, due to the limited space, is forced to take a close look at the furniture, its materials and textures.

Since its conception, MANIERA stages 'duos' of designers, artists and architects, that speak in a given space. Here the pieces are kept together. The two corridor-like rooms show two accidental worlds – a difficult duo. One space compiles the limited-edition furniture series MANIERA 01 & 02, designed by OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen and Studio Anne Holtrop. The other shows the newest series MANIERA 03 & 04 by 6a architects and Richard Venlet. Rugs by textile designer and artist Christoph Hefti accompany the duos in both rooms.

OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen
MANIERA 01
Prototypes



OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen is one of the most interesting and uncompromising young architectural practices at work today. It is renowned for its idiosyncratic architecture, in which utopian and non-realized projects are also customary. It does not invent the architecture, but reflects and considers what architecture can signify and be today. To reduce architecture to its bareness and essence. The firm's architectonic ideas start from geometrical corrections and rather rigid classifications, in order to measure the world as it presents itself to us and allow life to unfold in all its complexities.

A set of three tables, designed in close collaboration with engineer Arthur de Roover, is conceptualized as an investigation on structural spans and the strength of materials. The main frames of the tables are assembled out of industrial L-profiles of polyester, aluminium and steel respectively and covered with an ultra-thin table top in the same material. The different structural resistances of the L-sections generated three different sizes of tables spanning 100 cm (polyester), 185 cm (aluminium) and 260 cm (steel). A thick epoxy coating is poured on the table surface in order to create a uniform countertop for all three prototypes and to contrast the coldness of the extruded profiles with a smooth and soft finishing. The tables's legs are detachable (to allow flat-pack shipping). A smart metal connection pin assembles the vertical elements to the horizontal table top. This 'cuff button' as the designers humorously started naming it, sits precisely into the inner part of the polyester, aluminium and metal L-profiles, creating an elegant detail that adds character to the whole.

The Solo Chair is an open interpretation of the legendary walking-stick chair 'No.6822', as designed by the Austrian Thonet in about 1866, and long out of production. Undone from its actual folding mechanism, it becomes a 'frozen' constellation in which a small square table is suspended diagonally above the round seat. The unbalance produced by this side-table in the triangular structure, is countered by an additional weight at the opposite side of the leg, creating a persuasive play of motionless balance. The geometric composition of the circle and square, refers to the Solo House project by OFFICE in which a circular perimeter circumscribes a square inner patio: this project soon to be realized by the Brussels duo in the outskirts of Barcelona, gave the chair its name.

Studio Anne Holtrop

MANIERA 02

Furniture series based on the stone collection of Roger Caillois



Anne Holtrop's starting point for his work is mostly existing materials or shapes that initially, and in itself, have nothing to do with architecture, to then develop these into something architectural. Both the handling and the (re)-interpretation of these forms and materials provide the architectural aspect. For example, the way in which someone sees a butterfly or a lake in a Rorschach ink blot. Important in his work is that it remains interpretable exactly the way it originated.

Holtrop created a series of furniture objects based on the stone collection amassed by the French philosopher and sociologist Roger Caillois as pictured in his book *The Writing of Stones*. Caillois shows a collection of the insides of agate, jasper, and onyx stones. The remarkable thing in these stones is that we tend to see images in them. Anne Holtrop carefully selected fragments of the stones and from them made his *Mirror*, *Desk* and *Shelves*. The objects are given the same painstaking treatment as a painting. They are hand-painted by Sylvie Van der Kelen of the Brussels decorative painting academy *Institut Supérieur de Peinture Van der Kelen-Logelain* (since 1882). Specialized in trompe l'oeil techniques, she recreates the effect of Caillois' 'pierres à images'.

"The involvement of Sylvie Van der Kelen, the granddaughter of the founder of the academy, added an extra layer to the already multi-layered aspect of the stones: an interpretation of the material. From a distance they look exactly like stones. And when you get close up, you see the brush stroke, you see it is an extraordinary painting. It brings an ambiguity, where more than one viewpoint is possible. The pieces are collages of the material we had on our table while working. They're all made of fragments, or off-cut pieces. I wanted them to be 'space spaces,' little environments. The series could constitute a totally unified, immersive interior: a lush and decorative architecture. Even on their own, these works are more than room décor. They become less utilitarian and more like little milieus in which to place things." _ Anne Holtrop

Christoph Hefti
INTERLUDE 01
Rugs



Textile designer and artist Christoph Hefti, born in Switzerland, divides his time between Zurich, Paris, Stockholm and Brussels. After studying textile design in Zurich and fashion at Central Saint Martins in London, he started designing for Jean-Paul Gaultier in Paris and Dries Van Noten in Antwerp, where he spent 13 years as a creative assistant and was responsible for the printed fabrics, including research, design and development. On a freelance basis, Hefti designed for Lanvin and Balenciaga in Paris, and currently works on printed fabric projects for Acne Studios in Stockholm.

Parallel to his career in fashion, Christoph Hefti creates video installations that are shown in art spaces all over Europe. In collaboration with other artists, he is also active in the field of the performing arts, where he combines music, costume design, video and live art. Hefti interweaves all these media seemingly effortlessly in a whole, consistent, creative universe.

Christophe Hefti is highly esteemed as a member of juries for competitions in Switzerland and abroad. He himself has been awarded several Swiss Design Awards. In 2009 he won the 'Grand Prix Design' for his multidisciplinary oeuvre.

Christoph Hefti's latest love, for crafted textiles, has taken him to Nepal, where he designs and develops his own series of hand-knotted rugs. During his visits to Nepal, Hefti rediscovered the direct interaction between the designer and the craftsman and became fascinated by the use of traditional crafts in a contemporary context. He approaches the mystical and even spiritual tradition of storytelling textiles through his very personal yet worldly themes.

Christoph Hefti puts a lot of time and effort into composing the intricate designs, and selecting the perfect colours for the composition of materials and techniques, all to the benefit of the artistic qualities of each carpet. The result is a series of dazzling carpets that are true works of art and display Hefti's unique, joyful and eclectic style.

Richard Venlet
MANIERA 03
Hôtel Wolfers



Since the mid-nineties, architect / artist Richard Venlet's oeuvre has been built upon his profound interest in objects, sculpture, spatial interventions and exhibition spaces, as well as reflections on other artist's works, historical research and references. As an artist who deliberately intervenes in the architecture of an exhibition space, Venlet moves further into architectural production through regular collaboration with architectural firms.

Richard Venlet was born in Australia in 1964 but now lives and works in Brussels. His work has been shown in numerous national and international galleries and museums, including: S.M.A.K. in Ghent, BOZAR in Brussels, Macba in Barcelona and FRAC in Paris among others.

For his designs in MANIERA 03, Venlet has worked on the theme of Hôtel Wolfers, a modernist town house in Brussels built by Belgian architect Henry Van de Velde in 1929. The series was first presented in Hôtel Wolfers itself, in April 2015.

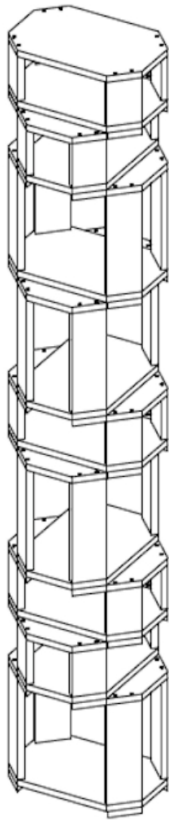
The building has been kept in the state it was found in in the seventies by its current owner, an art collector who prefers to treat the spaces like art works, not intervening with face-lifts, transformations or renovations. As a result of this attitude the house has been allowed to age in its full grace and originality.

Richard Venlet proposes a daybed, a rest zone on a human scale that echoes the shape of the building plot on which the house stands. The furniture can be read as a platform raised slightly above the floor. Upholstered with sheepskin, it creates an immediate intimacy; a comfort zone to rest and to reflect upon its surroundings.

In addition to the duplication of the site for the daybed, Venlet also made use of a lost decorative feature of Hôtel Wolfers. During his research he detected in old photographs that the doors of the dining room, main hall and music room were originally plated in silver. Richard Venlet reconstructed one of these doors and left it as a permanent intervention in the house.

This light-reflecting architectural element inspired Venlet to create two silver-plated stool lamps. The layered tones of light and shadow and their power to reflect the low sheen silver leaves, provide a subtle play of gleam and shine.

6a architects
MANIERA 04
Dust Free Friends



6a architects was founded in 2001 and has become one of the leading architectural practices in the UK. The practice is perhaps best known for its exhibition spaces in delicate historical settings, such as the South London Gallery (2010) which was expanded to include a Victorian terraced house, and Raven Row (2009), two Huguenot merchant's buildings that they adapted and extended into a gallery.

The firm is deeply rooted in 'making', their office being partly a workshop where they craft objects, mock-ups and furniture with collaborators who share a similar passion. This attitude, being rather unusual in the computer-dominated world of contemporary architecture, puts them in a position that allows aesthetic decisions to extend further than decorative additions to their architecture.

Dust Free Friends is a series of designs for small pieces of domestic furniture that can be made very simply at home, in restricted spaces, with a small number of tools and without specialist skills. The lightness and simplicity of the pieces is derived from a combination of observation of the way simple plywood constructions on a construction site are adapted to become stools, tables, steps and stairs, changing quickly and without fuss as workers need them.

The designs also re-examine the long tradition of self-build that has shared the journey through modernism with industry and craft. In the early 1970's, the Italian designer Enzo Mari launched his project and book 'Autoprogettazione', roughly translated 'self design'. In direct competition with an expanding consumer market, Mari open-sourced the home furnishings industry. The book, still available today, gives instructions for building easy-to-assemble furniture. More important than the end product, although usable, is its educational value. Mari wanted to reconnect people with how things were made.

Enzo Mari used rough sawn softwood, held together only by nails. The method matched the adhocism and toolset of the time. Forty years later, affordable designer consumerism has more or less replaced old fashioned messy DIY from our homes. Apple and Ikea have replaced amateurish tinkering with pleasure and promise sealed inside immaculate capsules. Today, the new lithium batteries at the heart of our wireless world have also revolutionised

what we can do. With the cordless drill and self-tapping screw in one hand and the dust-free precision of the Festool saw in the other, the world of self-made furniture has reopened with unprecedented speed and ease. In this series, 6a architects invite everyone to make his or her own everyday furniture from plywood, always a good servant to new tools. Good quality Douglas Fir plywood is dressed with William Morris wallpaper or pre-painted and then cut and reassembled, creating new arrangements of colour and pattern with wood surfaces and neat fibrous edges. The rules are easy to follow, and even more easy to change, to make best use of the sheet of plywood with the smallest number of cuts and least wastage. Craft and colour, paper and wood, maker and user come together in a new series, which it is hoped can and will be infinitely extended with the help of our dust-free friends.

Plant or floral patterned wallpapers are the natural friends of plywood and the wallpapers by William Morris in particular resonate with re-awakening the value and pleasure of manual work in the industrial age. William Morris (1834-1896), artist, philosopher and political theorist, was one of the most outstanding and influential designers of the Arts and Crafts Movement. In 1861, with a group of friends, he started the decorating business Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co which provided beautiful, hand-crafted products for the home. This was highly controversial at the time as it denounced the 'progress' of the machine age by rejecting unnecessary mechanical intervention. Morris was motivated by the desire to provide affordable 'art for all'. Driven by his boundless enthusiasm, the output of the company was prolific and encompassed all the decorative arts. He is perhaps best known for his wallpaper and fabric designs but he also designed and made embroideries, tapestries and stained-glass, reviving many of the traditional arts which had been swept away by industrialisation. Today, Morris' legacy continues with the company Morris & Co., which still produces authentic versions of his original wallpaper designs.

X CELEBRATING 10 YEARS

15 – 21 June
2015

Preview Day

Monday, June 15
Collectors preview: 12 – 5 pm
Vernissage: 5 – 8 pm
(by invitation only)

Public Show Days

Tuesday & Wednesday, June 16 & 17: 10 am – 8 pm
Thursday & Friday, June 18 & 19: 10 am – 7 pm
Saturday & Sunday, June 20 & 21: 11 am – 7 pm

Hall 1 Süd, Booth C04

Messe Basel, Messeplatz
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MANIERA

LIMITED EDITION FURNITURE

By architects & artists

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