

MANIERA I

MANIERA 16

Marie-José Van Hee

In collaboration with

Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino

Curated by

Katrien Vandermarliere



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Preview

Wednesday, 29 November

Opening

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Place de la Justice, 27–28

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MANIERA

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In early 2017, Marie-José Van Hee was awarded a prestigious International Fellowship by the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) for her contribution to architecture. MANIERA turns the spotlight on this grande dame of Belgian architecture by showing her new and existing furniture.

Marie-José's architecture is tranquil and ascetic. In most of her designs for homes, furniture is an integral part of the space. Walls, stairs, galleries, they all hide cupboards, cloakrooms, workspaces, alcoves or bookcases. This gives rise to empty space that the occupants themselves can make use of. Free-standing pieces of furniture are composed of a limited number of materials and display the same elementary structural simplicity. They can also always be used for several purposes.

MANIERA shows the existing bed-bank (bed/sofa) and the huis-werk-tafel (house/work/table), which are both the result of a design process lasting several years, alongside a new piece, the dien-blad-koffer (serving/tray/case). Marie-José invited Marie Mees and Cathérine Biasino to upholster the bed-bank and to domesticate the exhibition space. The textile designs by this Ghent duo, founders of the design label ThealfredCollection, are fully in keeping with Van Hee's architecture. They show the same preference for natural materials, craftsmanship and tactile quality. Together, Van Hee, Mees and Biasino like to use textiles to add a new dimension to interiors: they make it possible to define space flexibly and more lightly.

Noble and Adaptable

Katrien Vandemariere

The architecture of Marie-José Van Hee

Marie-José Van Hee is an architect who 'sees' places, space and proportions. She explores them, re-orders them, reshapes them and makes something new that we seemingly already know. To achieve this she works through a long process of thinking and drawing, of consultation with the client and her own experience, intuition and knowledge. This repeatedly yields a very precise building: where everything is perfectly thought through, consistent and right. The result is a tranquil architecture that is not conspicuous but evokes calm and asceticism. The austerity of the plan, the stacking of spaces, and the pure construction are related to the freedom that the architecture is intended to offer. These are buildings that make room for their occupation, where their use and its versatility can gain the upper hand. Houses, public buildings, designs for bridges, the refurbishment of public squares: it's a varied range of assignments in which the designer always embraces garden, landscape or city and urban life as a context.

The furniture of Marie-José Van Hee

In her designs for houses, the furniture is an integral part of the space: rooms and circulation areas. Walls, staircases, galleries and so on become concealed cupboards, cloakrooms, workspaces, alcoves or bookcases. Van Hee sees tables, chairs and beds as the only movable furniture that belongs in a house. The freestanding pieces of furniture contribute to the changes of use and can be recycled or passed down. They are added and moved by the occupants for various purposes and in different seasons and stages of life, and can be moved out again. They will not make any fundamental changes to the space or the effect of light.

Marie-José Van Hee does not consider furniture to be art or design, yet her furniture designs are based on a certain ambiguity. This can already be seen in the names given to each piece. The **bed-bank (bed/sofa)** can be used either as a bed or as a sofa. The **huis-werk-tafel (house/work/table)** is a worktable that can stand in the kitchen, patio, gallery or garden. These twin uses for the pieces of furniture are also a matter of limiting the number of objects in favour of 'Lebensraum' or 'living space'.

The motivation behind her furniture designs is usually a personal need. About twenty years ago, Van Hee designed beds for her own house, with futons that were raised off the ground. A simple structure: an oak frame, painted white, with cedar planks on which the futon could lie. This piece of furniture started to lead a life of its own and in 2016 was adapted to create the present **bed-bank** with its several uses. The oak frame was redesigned and divided into two longitudinal elements. The structure of the bed consists on the one longitudinal side of two legs on the corners connected by a beam and, on the other side of an identical beam with two recessed legs.

The prototype of the bed-bank was developed with Frank Ternier of LABT. Two beds are turned into a sofa by setting one of them up as a backrest and fixing the legs together using leather straps. This is a paraphrase of a solution Van Hee had herself applied when she slept in a youth hostel and tied two iron beds together with socks.

The **huis-werk-tafel (2011-2017)** began at the request of a client who could not find the table he had in mind in the standard design ranges. Van Hee started working on the design, which was her first joint project with Frank Ternier of LABT, in 2013. What is crucial is the way the steel and wood are connected to form a sturdy object. To limit the weight of the table with its structure in black stainless steel, and to enable it to be used both indoors and outdoors, they chose acetylated softwood painted white or green. The table-top is made up of beams of varying widths that are held together by four threaded rods and which also fix the four steel legs.

The **dien-blad-koffer (serving/tray/case) (2017)**, designed for MANIERA combines three functions. It is an occasional table-cum-storage place for linen or books and newspapers. The structure is a continuation of the bed-bank; oak legs with cedar beams between them. The case is a spacious hanging bag in oiled cowhide leather, developed in association with Michel Devos. The bag can be used by taking off the cedar serving tray.

The textiles by Marie Mees and Cathérine Biasino

Several interiors of houses by Marie-José Van Hee have been fitted with curtains and carpets by the textile designers Marie Mees and Cathérine Biasino in collaboration with the architect. It is all about the way textiles can change rooms and summon up emotions by their colour, movement, translucence and sound.

Although textiles may not seem to be naturally combinable with Marie-José Van Hee's architecture, they do turn out to be. The naturalness of such materials as wool, linen and cotton are in the same register as stone, concrete, wood and metal, which usually appear in the interiors in unworked form and in their original colour. Several of Van Hee's clients have wanted a filtering of sunlight, to shut out the darkness of the evening and night, or a sound-deadening element. These practical requirements however also express a desire for intimacy, a lighter and more flexible definition of the architecture and a second, softer layer. This gives rise to a dialogue between the designers and an interplay between textiles and architecture.

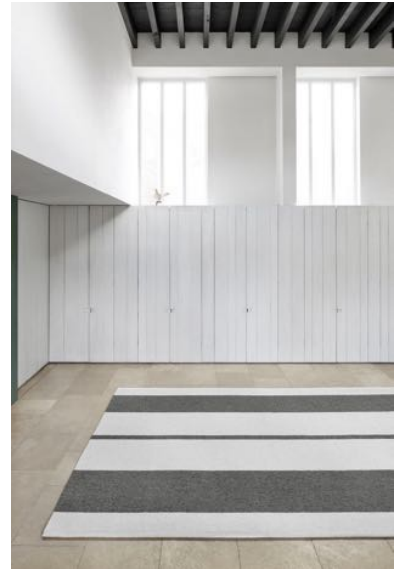
The affinity between Van Hee, Mees and Biasino is also to be found in their common craftsmanlike approach to their discipline. The search for and rendering of exactly what the brief consists of, the design itself and the dialogue with those who are implementing it, are the same steps in the process, which the architect and the textile designers follow-up very meticulously. Marie Mees and Cathérine Biasino carry out new research for each separate assignment: into the appropriate raw material (wool, cotton, linen), the thickness of the thread, the colour (preferably of plant origin), the structure of the weaving, and the workshops where it is made by craftsmen.

A limited edition version of the bed-bank

On the occasion of the exhibition 'A piece of furniture is also a house' at the Design museum in Ghent (2016), Marie Mees and Cathérine Biasino designed a cushion for Van Hee's bed-bank in association with Julie Van den Meutter. For a limited edition version of the bed-bank to add to the MANIERA collection, Marie-José Van Hee again invited Mees and Biasino to upholster the bed-bank, to make it into a proper, comfortable sofa and bed. Based on a design and basic idea by Marie-José Van Hee, this duo developed a thin mattress which can be rolled up to become a backrest. The mattress, produced by Cover & Couch, is accompanied by a new series of knitted cushions whose designs and graphic motifs (seven different ones) are related to the dimensions and the individual elements of the bed-bank. A sturdily knitted fabric in slightly matted wool was chosen. They are made in one piece, with no seams, and look like an envelope in which you can put a cushion. Finishing the bed-bank with textiles results in a delicate composition with an extra element that is as manipulable as the piece of furniture itself.



Varkensstraat
Marie-José Van Hee
© David Grandorge



Varkensstraat
Marie-José Van Hee
Carpet by Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino
© Filip Dujardin



huis-werk-tafel
Marie-José Van Hee
© Crispijn Sas



Een Meubel is ook een Huis
Curated by Katrien Vandemariere
© Design museum Gent



Zuidzande
Marie-José Van Hee
© David Grandorge



Zuidzande
Marie-José Van Hee
Curtain by Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasano
© David Grandorge

Marie-José Van Hee (BE)



Varkensstraat
Marie-José Van Hee
Carpets by Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino
© Filip Dujardin

Marie-José Van Hee (°1950, Ghent BE) studied architecture at the Higher Institute of Architecture Sint-Lucas in Ghent (Hoger Architectuurinstituut Sint-Lucas). She formed her own architecture studio in Ghent in 1975. Since 1990 her office has worked closely together on a number of projects with Robbrecht en Daem architecten, with whom she shares an office in Lieremanstraat in Ghent. Currently, she employs 8-10 collaborators who are working on projects for public buildings, private houses and urban development.

As a professor in architectural design, Marie-José has long been connected with the Architecture Department of Sint-Lucas School of Architecture. She was visiting professor at the ETH Zurich in 2016. She has lectured on various occasions in Europe, and has been invited as a guest lecturer and critic at universities in Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

Marie-José Van Hee has received various architecture prizes and nominations, on a national and international level. On three occasions she was awarded the Provincial Prize for Architecture (2013 – Province Vlaams-Brabant / 2003 and 1993 – Province Oost-Vlaanderen), and the reconversion of the centre of the cities of Deinze and Ghent received the Prize Bouwmeester in 2013. She was nominated for the Dutch Abe Bonnemaprijs 2013, and was twice nominated for the Mies Van der Rohe European Prize for Architecture (in 1999 for her own house and in 2013 for Market Hall Ghent).

Marie-José Van Hee participated in the 13th Biennale di Venezia on invitation of curator David Chipperfield, and received the Biannual Culture Prize for Architecture of the Flemish Community in 1997. She has been a fellow of the Belgian Royal Academy for Sciences and Art since 2008 and has been recently honoured with the 2017 RIBA International Fellowship.

Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino (BE)



Alfred Collection
Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino
© Filip Dujardin

Marie Mees-Cathérine Biasino is a design duo based in Belgium. The two designers live and work in Ghent and both teach at the Sint Lucas Luca School of Arts there. In 2006 they together set up the Maison Marie Mees Cathérine Biasino design studio. Their first design label, ThealfredCollection, dates from 2009 and consists of a collection of durable interior textiles.

In addition, they also work for several architects (including Marie-José Van Hee Architects, Robbrecht & Daem Architects and John Pawson) and develop products for other labels and exhibitions. They recently designed a collection of handwoven carpets for Valerie_Objects.

In 2008, Mees and Biasino were awarded a Henry van de Velde label (B) for a collection of relief wall coverings in combination with textiles, and a Design Award from Wallpaper magazine (UK) in 2011. Wallpaper also included them in an exhibition entitled Handmade in Milaan in 2013, alongside other labels and designs by Hermes and Jasper Morrison.

In 2014 they were among the selection made by DAMN Magazine at the Broeltoren Biennale in Kortrijk (with, among others, Jasper Morrison, Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, and Office Kersten Geers David Van Severen). In 2015 their work was shown at the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen in Rotterdam (NL), in the exhibition Design Derby 1815-2015.

The duo's textiles have been shown several times at the Milan Triennale: in 1997 together with Maarten Van Severen and in 2014 in the exhibition Toolbox Belgium is Design. With their Indigofera carpets they were part of the exhibition Belgium is Design in the Palazzo Litta in 2016 (with Muller Van Severen and others). At the Design Museum in Ghent, their work was included in the exhibition Maarten Van Severen en Co. A design for cushions was shown in 2016, in the exhibition En Meubel is ook een huis. interieurs + meubelen van Marie-José Van Hee, Christian Kieckens, Paul Robbrecht en Hilde Daem Architecten en Marc Dubois. In 2016-2017, in the same place, they showed a handwoven carpet at Hands on Design, the 8th Design Triennale.

Katrien Vandermarliere
(BE)



Junya Ishigami
How small? How vast? How architecture grows.
Curated by Katrien Vandermarliere © VAI

Katrien Vandermarliere is an art historian and was responsible for the architecture programme at deSingel International Arts Campus in Antwerp from 1991 to 2002. She curated more than 70 exhibitions of international and Belgian contemporary architects, planners and landscape designers. She was a member of the editorial board of the Flemish Architecture Yearbook (1992-2000) and director of the Flemish Architecture Institute (2002-2010). In Belgium, she has had a particular influence on the presentation of architecture to a non-professional public. Internationally, she was the commissioner for the Belgian Pavilion at the International Architecture Biennale in Venice and in 2004 received the Golden Lion Award for the best pavilion content.

From 2011 to 2014, Katrien Vandermarliere worked as an independent curator for the Flemish Architecture Institute and deSingel International Arts Campus. Since 2014 she has been the head of communication for the Ney & Partners engineering practice in addition to her freelance work as a curator and editor.

Vandemarliere has been a member of countless architecture competition juries, subsidy committees and think tanks for the stimulation of architectural culture in Flanders and abroad. She is currently working on a publication about the work of Marie-José Van Hee.

About MANIERA

Limited edition furniture by architects and artists

MANIERA gallery commissions architects and artists to develop limited edition furniture series. As architects often have a close relationship with the visual arts and artists are often inspired by the spatial environment, MANIERA intends to crystalize these proximities into new design proposals. More than just furniture, the objects issued by MANIERA are a deliberate search for collisions between the realms of architecture, design and art.

Above all, MANIERA wants to bring a young, up-and-coming generation to the fore, but also to show established and renowned figures in a new way. The most important elements in this are a personal language and writing, a conceptual mode of thought, and an authentic and idiosyncratic way of working.

MANIERA was founded in 2014 by Amaryllis Jacobs and Kwinten Lavigne, who have both had long careers in major Brussels art institutions. MANIERA's first exhibitions took place in domestic settings in Brussels. In April 2016 the couple opened a gallery in 'Le Sablon', the Brussels neighbourhood specialising in art and vintage design. Every now and then, MANIERA will continue to exhibit in interesting residential buildings when it is relevant to the project.

MANIERA 01	OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen (BE)
MANIERA 02	Studio Anne Holtrop (NL)
MANIERA 03	Richard Venlet (BE)
MANIERA 04	6a architects (UK)
MANIERA 05	architecten de vylder vinck taillieu (BE)
MANIERA 06	Studio Mumbai (IN)
MANIERA 07	Jonathan Muecke (US)
MANIERA 08	Juliaan Lampens (BE)
MANIERA 09	Sophie Nys (BE)
MANIERA 10	Valérie Mannaerts (BE)
MANIERA 11	Trix + Robert Haussmann (CH)
MANIERA 12	Christ & Gantenbein (CH)
MANIERA 13	Bojan Šarčević (BA / FR)
MANIERA 14	PRODUCTORA (MX)
MANIERA 15	Christoph Hefti (CH)
MANIERA 16	Marie-José Van Hee i.s.m. Marie Mees & Cathérine Biasino (BE)

Next MANIERA shows:

Operae / Piemonte Handmade

MANIERA presents Piovene Fabi (IT)
3 – 5 November 2017
Lingotto Torino – Pavilion 5
Via Nizza, 294
Turino

Design Miami

MANIERA presents Studio Mumbai (IN)
5 – 10 December 2017
Meridian Avenue & 19th Street
Miami Beach