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PLUS A SPECIAL FOCUS ON
ITALIAN ARCHITECTURE AND MILAN SALONI



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This year's fair saw a return to craft by international designers through collaborations with Swedish companies and design schools. *Owen Pritchard* reports

For the five days in February during the Stockholm Furniture Fair, more than 750 international exhibitors occupied the city. Despite the disparate sites scattered across the archipelago, it was the events hosted in shops and galleries outside of the main fair that presented some of the best work at the show, including products by prominent Swedish companies such as Swedesse, Offeect and Kasthall.

This year, a clear Swedish influence could be seen, even in the work by international designers. The best of these demonstrated a conscientious approach to materials and manufacturing processes. The

considered detailing and the subtle use of materials brought an understated sensibility to much of the work.

Although the recent economic slow-down has left designers and manufacturers struggling to produce unique work, a return to craft among many of the international designers resulted in high-quality products, with a prevalence of simple, typically Scandinavian aesthetic.

The student work exhibited in Greenhouse, the young designers' section, was most impressive. Bold experiments with materials and form provided a glimpse into a generation of designers ready to steer

Scandinavian design in a new direction. Of particular note was Hide and Seek by the University of Gothenburg. Work from the MA design programme sought inspiration in play; tables became tents; stools became canvases, and seats became hide-outs.

Profiled here is a selection of the best furniture from the Stockholm Furniture fair. Though the nationalities and experience of the designers vary, they all work in Sweden or with Swedish companies: Luca Nichetto is Italian and collaborates with Offeect; HwaSung Yoo has been studying in Sweden; Chris Martin has been based there since 1995, and Anna Kraitz is Swedish but studied in Hungary.

Right: After developing models in clay, Mars made this 3D rendering of the lamp for the CNC machine

Bottom: Having been set in the mould, the silicone rubber lampshade was hung in order to manipulate its shape

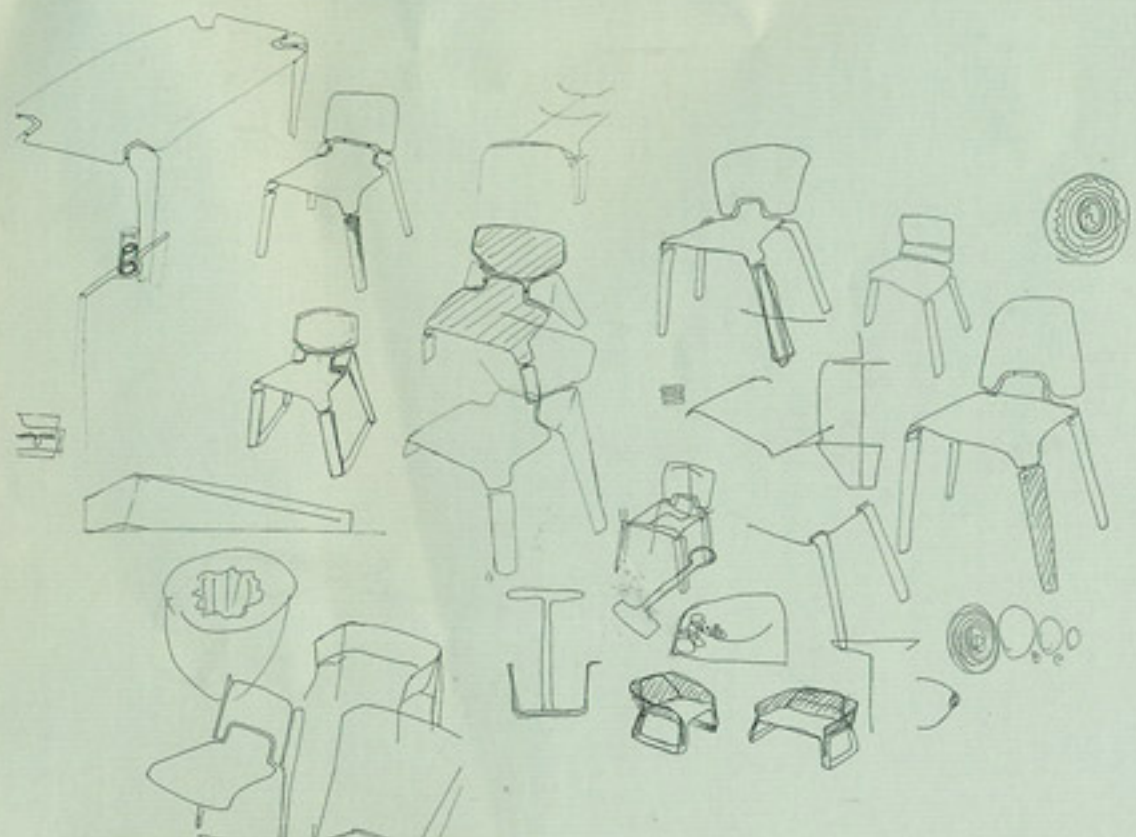
HAT LAMP MARS

The Hat Lamp by South Korean designer HwaSung Yoo, who works under the name Mars, has been created using silicone rubber, which appears as hard ceramic, but is in fact elastic to the touch. The mould was produced using a CNC milling machine after developing models first in clay then using 3D software. 'The lamp invites people to use their imagination,' says Mars. 'I want people to respond to common forms in an imaginative way and it is important to me to do more than simply provide images.'





Right: Nichetto's sketches of Robo for Offeffect. He worked closely with the company's Research and Development department to create the piece using environmentally sound materials



Below right: The felt is created from recycled plastic bottles and sits between the layers of plywood, which holds the structural rods in place

Far right: An early cardboard model exploring structure. From the start, the challenge was to develop a chair that could be assembled from separate components



ROBO FOR OFFEFFECT
LUCA NICHETTO

Inspired by Chris Cunningham's 1999 video for Björk's All is Full of Love, in which the singer is portrayed as a cyborg and her limbs are disassembled, Nichetto used this idea of component design for this chair. The result is a flat-packed seat made from plywood components fixed together using metal rods and recycled felt material. Available in black and white, Robo has a distinctly sci-fi aesthetic tempered by a Scandinavian influence with its choice of materials and sustainable credentials. www.lucanichetto.com

ALL IMAGES THIS PAGE: LUCA NICHETTO/OFFEFFECT

