

Owl be
back...
to Milan



THE SALONE WEEKLY: EDITION



CITY, SLICKER: MILAN'S MAYOR ON BEING THE HOTTEST HOST



COLLECT CALL: ITALIAN DESIGN GOES UNDER THE HAMMER



ARCHITECTURE SAFARI: WE VISIT MILAN'S MALIGNED 'RED DINOSAUR'



POUR FORTH: OUR FAVOURITE FINDS FROM THE FIERA AND BEYOND

"ULTIMATELY WE WILL BECOME EXTINCT; WE MAY AS WELL DESIGN A BEAUTIFUL EXTENSION AND BUILD ON OUR LEGACY SO THE NEXT SPECIES WILL REMEMBER US WITH SOME RESPECT"

Paola Antonelli on curating a Triennial triumph See page 37



AN OUTSIDE CHANCE *Place in the sun*

Outdoor furniture is sitting pretty

The labyrinth of trade-fair halls at Salone del Mobile may be the worst place to soak up the spring sun this Milan Design Week but they are the spot for forecasting where the furniture industry is heading – outdoors. The alfresco market grew by more than 5 per cent last year to €14.6bn and is expected to be worth €20bn by 2024. Releases this year reflect market growth and you can expect debuts galore at Salone in 2019.

It's a bright time for this industry but crafting the perfect porch perch isn't easy business. And while traditional furniture companies are adding outdoor collections (some modifying existing products in harder fabrics) it's those who really know the trade making the best patio plays. Enter Kettal, the Spanish specialist (items pictured) which is banking big on Salone this year with releases from Patricia Urquiola and a canny re-edition from the 1950s. We profile the brand and three other firms set to shine at Salone.

— Full report on page 37



TIME FOR A SWITCH? *Bright ideas*

A spotlight on our favourite street

As visitors to this year's pendant-pushing EuroLuce component of Salone del Mobile will discover, lighting manufacturers will go above and beyond in their attempts to attract attention. Here, a dazzling array of sconces, track lights, desk lamps, chandeliers, bright bulbs and more will all jostle for air time amid an international flood of lighting-product releases. But how many of these pieces will do what good lighting should do – make people feel (and look) better and create cosy spaces worthy of an evening linger? Not as many as one might hope.

With this in mind we veered away from these twinkling display stands and made our way to Milan's most illuminating design precinct – Corso Monforte, otherwise known as the 'Street of Light'. Here, the nation's best lighting brands have joined forces and opened shops creating an attractive (and well-lit) alcove that adds to the city's growing retail might. It's a story that's more quiet but with much more longevity than many that will be told within the bustle of EuroLuce.

— Full report on page 40



LOOKING UP *Local knowledge*

A studio visit with Locatelli Partners

From his apartment on the 24th floor of the rangy Torre Velasca, architect Massimiliano Locatelli has one of the best vantage points from which to chart the city's speedy development. His studio has been contributing to it with sensitive refits (and the odd hi-tech experiment or two) for the past 25 years. We drop in for a tour.

— Full report on page 44

CLOSE TIES *Three failsafe family firms*

Keep it together for the kids

Design headlines and column inches often obsess over mergers and the dull minutiae of corporate rejigs. By contrast, we've sought out three proud, independently owned firms and asked about the benefits and pitfalls of keeping a business in the family.

— Full report on page 12




If your gnome's not down... you're not coming in

A TRADE FAIR TIMELINE FOR THE YEAR AHEAD

Industry itineraries: for shows from garden goodies to bikes and bathrooms

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Clockwise from far left: David Glaetli in the KMS studio; the Gastor series; ColourWood chair; low table made using traditional Japanese techniques; Elephant sofas; Elephant sofa in a lighter colour

FAIR WATCH / JAPAN

In great shape

David Glaetli, creative director of Japan's Karimoku New Standard, reveals what makes the furniture brand a compelling proposition in a crowded market.

WRITER Junichi Toyofuku PHOTOGRAPHER Daniel Gebhart de Koekoek



Founded in 1947, wooden furniture maker Karimoku is a household name in Japan. The company is known for its own furniture lines such as Karimoku 60 – a best-selling collection since the 1960s – but it also made carton boxes and chair components for other companies when it first started. Today, the Aichi-headquartered company has six factories and 26 showrooms in Japan and its much-loved K chair can be found everywhere from private homes and design offices to cafés and restaurants across the country. Karimoku has a long story but that doesn't stop it from being innovative and ambitious. In 2005 the company started exhibiting at international furniture fairs such as IMM in Köln. In 2009 it launched Karimoku New Standard (KNS), a new brand with modern design and the highest carpentry craftsmanship – the aim was to push its international ambitions even further.

KNS maintains total control over the quality from the sourcing of materials (mostly maple, chestnut and oak from northern Japan) to the production line. The brand owes its high-quality production to Karimoku's established manufacturing network and innovative design to Tokyo-based Swiss creative director David Glaetli and partner designers from Europe. This year KNS will make its 10th appearance at Salone by unveiling 19 products and concepts, including lamps, chairs and a work desk.

MONOCLE: What sets KNS apart in the industry?

DAVID GLAETTLI: What makes KNS truly unique is the combination of contemporary international design with the carpentry tradition and cutting-edge technology of a manufacturer like Karimoku, and the fact that only sustainably sourced Japanese hardwood is used for the entire

collection. What started 10 years ago as an experiment in bringing together the innovation of young European designers with the profound know-how of the craftsmen at Karimoku has turned into a successful collection.

M: What is your role and responsibility at KNS?

DG: As creative director I define the brand's concept, appearance, design and product strategy. I select and brief the designers and choose collaborators such as graphic designers and photographers. I supervise the product-development process – the revision of design proposals and prototypes, mediation between designers and manufacturer, and the market launch of the product.

M: You studied design and worked in the industry in Italy and Switzerland. How are you helping KNS to tap into the European market?

DG: I have lived in Japan for more than 10 years but my background allows me to give the brand an international, maybe slightly northern European feel while it keeps its Japanese heart and soul. KNS furniture works just as well in Stockholm and Los Angeles as it does in Seoul or Tokyo. Having said that, for KNS the Asia Pacific region is actually more important in terms of volume.

M: What is the set-up? Who are the designers and how do you work with them?

DG: The idea is to create long-lasting relationships with designers and keep working with them to grow together, which in my opinion leads to better design quality. It has also always been important to give a younger generation of lesser-known designers a platform, although over the years some have become very well known. The team of

designers is growing slowly, with one new member every two or three years. I work with them very closely, which is why a good personal relationship is essential.

M: What's the biggest market for KNS now and which market are you trying to tap into?

DG: Japan is still the biggest market, followed by Korea. The plan is to grow in Europe as well as in the US. In terms of market segments, the contract market has become very important, although the brand originally was almost entirely designed for home use. This development has an increasing influence on the product line-up and the entire brand.

M: KNS has been showing in Milan since 2010. How important is Salone?

DG: It remains the ultimate platform to show to the design world what you are and what you've got. It is essential to be there and to be part of it, even when the effect can not be measured directly in numbers.

M: What vision and goal do you have for KNS?

DG: I'm trying to connect the fields of home and contract and develop designs that work in professional environments without becoming too technical. The table system by Geckeler Michels, the Archive high table by Christian Haas or the lobby sofa by Big Game are some examples. Besides this, Karimoku has started to use its know-how in carpentry and engineering to look beyond furniture. While it is too early to say where this will lead, we have started to develop kitchen and lighting concepts to give an idea of where this could take us in the years to come. karimoku-newstandard.jp

"I have lived in Japan for more than 10 years but my background allows me to give the brand a slightly northern European feel"

FAIR WATCH / DENMARK

Chair necessities

Family-run BRDR Krüger banked on a global market for its Danish-made furniture. Here's how it made the jump.

BRDR Krüger is a Danish furniture company steeped in history – five generations' worth, to be exact. Yet it's fair to say that in 2019, the brand has hit its sweetest spot. After taking the reins in 2013, brother and sister Jonas and Julie Krüger have piloted the business through an impressive growth spurt, scaling up from 10 to 50 staff and quadrupling its manufacturing footprint.

To reflect this, Salone del Mobile will be the company's most

ambitious foray into the design-fair circuit so far. Here they will debut a new collection of the hand-somely carved timber and carefully upholstered forms they've become celebrated for. Although the furniture derives its quality from the rigour of classic Danish carpentry, it is also imbued with a contemporary edge. Jonas Krüger says that the key to the company's renaissance has been taking design inspiration from beyond Danish shores as it works with smart companies globally on project-specific furniture commissions.

"I think that it is important for us to not be stuck in the past," says Jonas, noting that a good chunk of the collection is a tailored market version of commercial project commissions. "Our heritage still shows, of course: it's in the craftsmanship, quality and durability of

the pieces, which is meant to be passed down to the next generation."

So what will be on show at Salone? The fruits of a good year of collaborations, including the Jari chair, which was devised with Copenhagen's OEO Studio for Rene Redzepi's new INUA restaurant in Tokyo, as well as a modified version of OEO's Pauline chair, developed in collaboration with a luxury fashion house. **Nolan Giles**
brdr-kruger.com



From left: ARV chairs created for the new Noma restaurant in Copenhagen; Karm sofas; Jari collection