



AJ

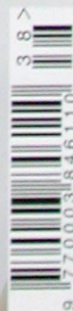
THE DESIGN ISSUE

*Architecture takes a back seat to mark the
London Design Festival – page 26*

18.09.08

Technical & Practice
*Scotland's A-listed swimming
pool upgrades for the 2014
Commonwealth Games – p41*

Beyond Buildings
*The AJ reports from the Venice
architecture biennale – p45*



DEDICATED

TO

DESIGN

Inspired by the London Design Festival, this week's AJ is all about design. We interview Vitra supremo *Rolf Fehlbaum*, and *Jean Nouvel*, *Adam Caruso* and

Luc Merx talk shop. But first, *Laura Houseley* analyses the top emerging design trends

THE FACE OF CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

has never been so hard to recognise. From the computer-aided creations of Matthias Pliessnig to the reshaped found objects of Martino Gamper, this generation of designers is a mixed bunch that produces, at first glance, a stimulating but inhomogeneous array of work.

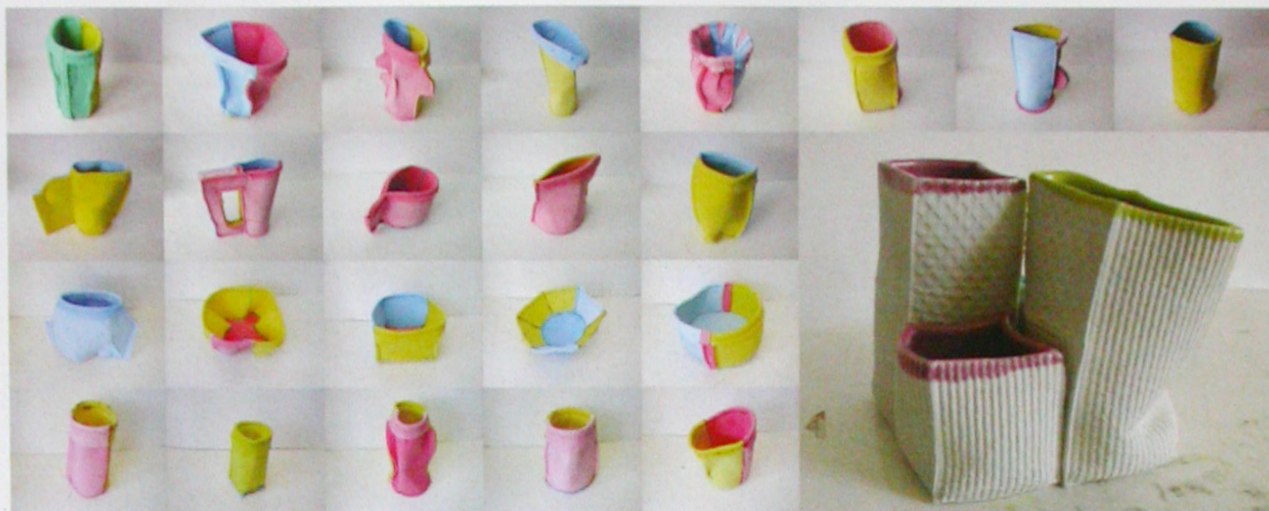
On closer inspection we see that recurring themes underpin the visual eclecticism. There is the new breed, such as Maarten Baas, where idea beats function and the surreal is the norm. There is a concern with production – Nacho Carbonell is typical – where it's not so much what is being made, but how it is made, that counts. And there is the quest for sustainability, which manifests itself in both the thrifty nature of ready-mades and in technologically-advanced industrial designs.

The flux of contemporary design is well documented. Less so are the changes in our own relationship with it. That so much new design has been about limited edition or just plain inaccessible work is a result of an acceptance of the designer as creator.

That designers of the same generation can find so many contradictory means of expression is a result not of their making but of ours. It is the industry and the consumer's acceptance, and perhaps most importantly, our interest in this energetic period of experimentation, that has sustained it so long.

FRANKENSTEIN DESIGN





BACK-YARD INDUSTRIALISTS

Martino Gamper uses carpentry with great skill to reinvent and reshape found objects, such as with these chairs for Conran. His work will be exhibited at Somerset House, London, from 17 September to 7 December.

Bas Kools stitched kitchen sponges together to create moulds to mass-produce these Flexible Ceramics. His work will be on show at Changing Dimensions, 17-22 September, at 30 Thurloe Place, London SW7 2HQ. >>

A product's worth is often in its idea, like Maarten Baas' Chunky Bore storage unit for Established & Sons. Baas' work will be on show at Established & Sons' central London showroom in October.

SUPER CONCEPTUALS

