



FROM MEDITERRANEAN TRADITIONAL TO ISRAELI CONTEMPORARY DESIGN

March 5th – June 20th, 2010

Curated by Alon Razgour, Tel Aviv, Israel

“Israeli design is the world’s best-kept secret,” wrote Professor Mel Bayers in his book *Improvisation*. Israeli culture combines many diverse influences, which offer an often difficult, yet fruitful ground for creativity, resulting in wide ranging and high quality designs. The Israeli culture and history stimulate innovation in design while preserving traditions that embody the society. These traditions include a vivid sense of humour, a rejection of bourgeois ideas of beauty, and a cunning use of new and used materials.

This is an exhibition of current Israeli industrial design, examining what makes this country unique on the world stage. The exciting, dramatic, and colourful pieces on display include furniture, lighting, and recreation equipment.

PARTICIPATING DESIGNERS:

I. Alon Razgour, Designer & Curator, www.razgour.com

Alon Razgour specializes in redefining common materials and objects so that they become playful, colorful and revitalized consumer products for a wide range of industries. Working out of Tel Aviv, he challenges the limitations of shape, form and technology head on, reaching new dimensions with designs that compliment the natural properties of the material. This exhibition showcases the humour, the rejection of bourgeois and the use of new and old material.

Alon believes that there are endless possibilities for redefining and designing the ordinary so that it becomes extraordinary because of the way people can interact with, and communicate through our products. Many consumer products have become merely functional objects, without much thought given to their physical and spatial properties. Using imagination, intuition as well as "emotional storming", Alon designs soft, gentle curves that intricately weave the primitive and simple with the clean and modern—for today’s culture. This natural, yet purposeful approach of creating objects with soft contours that conform easily into our lives are a welcome alternative to the stark linear designs many of us have become accustomed to.

2. Tarazi Studio

Designer: Ezri Tarazi

www.tarazistudio.com

Born in Israel in 1962, Ezri Tarazi has been running the Tarazi studio since 1990. He works as a designer for important international companies such as IDEO, Intel, Beko, Sagitta, Sonacris Magink and Edra. In 2002 he was awarded a prize by the Israeli government for his work both at home and abroad. His works have been displayed in galleries and museums throughout the world including MOMA in NY and the Triennale in Milan. He has been the Head of the Department of Industrial Design at the Bezalel Academy in Jerusalem for eight years, and is currently leading the department's new Master program.

3. Animi Causa

Designers: Sarit Attias and Amit Axelrod

www.animicausa.com

Animi Causa (for reasons of spirit) is one of Israel's well-known innovative manufacturers of high quality and modern multi-use furniture. Animi Causa's commercial success is the result of the artistic and commercial symbiosis of Mrs. Sarit Attias and Mr. Amit Axelrod, owners and co-founders of the company.

Animi Causa creates from the center of one's awareness: their emotions. By means of exploring the relationship between object and the body, their designs merge these two forces into both a sensory and emotional experience.

4. Umamy

Designers: Doron Oryan, Eran Apelbaum and Sarit Atziz

<http://www.umamy.com/>

UMAMY Design Group Group was founded in order to implement new ideas and formulate unique approaches in design. UMAMY designs and creates products in cooperation with local and international manufacturers and entrepreneurs. Using humor, innovative thinking and creative brainstorming, UMAMY Design Group explores societies and habits and challenges original concepts, resulting in unique objects that hit a hidden cord in people's hearts.

Often, in the process of developing products, we find ourselves trapped within cultural frameworks that entrench our way of thought and inhibit us from perceiving and pursuing the innovative and the new. UMAMY Design Group focuses and explores these frameworks in order to dissolve them and pave the way to new creative spheres.

UMAMY had exhibited annually since 2000 at the International Furniture Fair in Milan. All members of the Group are graduates of the Holon Institute of Technology in Holon, Israel.

5. VONS

Designer: Yael Yarzin

<http://www.vonsdesign.com/>

Yael Vons Yarzin is a WIZO College graduate with a degree in graphic design. She worked as senior art director for the McCann Erickson Ad Agency and as a freelancer in advertising, graphic design and product design. Over the past five years she has been creating objects d'art under the name VONS.

The VONS Line is comprised of unique ceramic pieces that blend Yael Vons Yarzin's family history and childhood memories with various artistic styles. Her pieces draw their inspiration from the Victorian Era, from architecture, textile, advertising, graphics, children's toys and even from the pastry world. The recently launched Victoria collection is a royal, grandiose line primarily inspired by the hedonistic fete. The pieces interweave symbols of nobility, from serving bowls set on golden lion's paws, to drinking cups with pompous handles. The artist's intentional extreme use of kitsch, combined with interwoven texts, elements from nature and 14 karat gold create a sophisticated collection, rich in color, detail and humor.

6. M.G.A. Design Studio

Designer: Michal Greenberg Abrahami

The studio specializes in varied design such as: medical gadgets, office items, desk accessories, tableware and Judaic ware. The discipline is the first step of each design project followed by developing and planning how to produce a better design. To complete process functionality and aesthetics are considered. Most of the products are made from metal or plastic using a range of techniques and finishes. The designs reflect a sense of humor, movement and simplicity gleaned from daily life. The products sell to museum galleries, architectures, inertial designer, and companies in the business sector. Client attention + marketplace awareness = simple and functional products.

For the last two years Michal specialized in a case study on the Sheba Medical Center in Tel-Hashomer, Israel. It involves sensory research in the Multiple Sclerosis Center there. The research was focused on patients who suffer from various sensory impairments. He designed a sensory necklace STT. Some other products designed for the Multiple Sclerosis Center are: motor products that suit the environment of the patient, such as a circle rubber, metal sticks to match the holes, and a sensory puzzle. He also designed a memory product to remind patients when you give themselves injections.

7. Amidov

Designers: Ami Drach & Dov Ganchrow

<http://www.amidov.com/>

Drach & Ganchrow's studio was formed in 1996 with the belief that acting in diverse fields generates superior design. Their work in industrial design, furniture design and interior design defuse into one another transferring ideas, technologies and esthetics. Born of their south Tel-Aviv studio are set designs, one-off objects, exhibitions and medical equipment; every project is worked out with focus and consideration of individual needs and context. Investigations and experiments in design are incorporated seamlessly into the studios working format. A design dialog is kept up in both academic and professional realms.

8. Yaacov Kaufman Design

Designer: Yaacov Kaufman

<http://www.yaacov-kaufman.com/>

Yaacov Kaufman lived in Poland from 1945 then immigrated to Israel in 1957. He graduated from the Bat-yam Institute of Art in the sculpture department. Kaufman currently lives in Tel Aviv and works in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and Milan, on design projects in collaboration with Italian and European manufacturers including, Lumina Italia, Tecno, Arflex, Porro and Luxo. He is a Professor of Industrial Design at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. The Bezalel Academy published his book titled *Chair* in 1987.

Yaacov Kaufman owns a number of patents concerning motion structures applied for arm-lamps, furniture and exposition design, ergonomics and design oriented technologies such as composite wooden surfaces.

9. Studio Groovy

Designer: Yinnon & Danit Simhi

<http://www.groovy.co.il/design.html>

Studio Groovy was founded in 2004 by the couple Yinnon & Danit Simhi (parents of Uma). Yinnon (born 1972) graduated from Vital – the Tel Aviv Centre for Design Studies in 2001, and has 9 years experience in model building. Today, he also teaches at the Kibbutzim College of Education, Technology and the Arts in Tel-Aviv and gives guest lectures in various places. Danit (born 1976) studied computers and has an impressive background in the arts. Danit is a full time mother to Uma as well as an integral part of Groovy's team.

10. Reddish

Designers: Naama Steinbock and Idan Friedman

<http://www.reddishstudio.com/>

Reddish studio is the collaborative work of product designers Naama Steinbock and Idan Friedman, both graduates of Holon Institute of Technology, Israel. Since 2001 they have been producing their own projects alongside client projects. They play with ideas, traditions, materials and technologies while observing and finding inspiration in their surroundings – from the Taj Mahal to a shoelace. Their varied work integrates industrial processes with meticulous handwork. Their approach is meant to produce loved object that have high self-esteem.

11. Leor & Lederman

Designers: Elan Leor & Eran Lederman

<http://www.leor-lederman.com>

Located in the heart of Tel-Aviv, the leor-lederman studio is run by designers Eran Lederman and Elan Leor, both of who are also Lecturers at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design in Jerusalem. The leor-lederman studio works to enhance lifestyle experiences and social conscience, from day-to-day objects to renewable energy and more. The studio aims to be influential in generating interdisciplinary and international projects, interacting with creative and manufacturing capabilities.

12. Yuval Tal

Designer: Yuval Tal

<http://www.yuvaltal.com/>

At Yuval Tal designers believe that proper design is a fine combination of professionalism, creativity and their own magical ingredient - caring about and loving what they do. Yuval Tal industrial design studio is always focused on the design and development of new products in various design fields. In their eyes there is no substitute to precise and maximum attention to details on the way to creating a new product which combines technological innovation, maximum practicality and a heart -stirring design.

13. Eilon Armon

Designer: Eilon Armon

Improvisation was always a part of Eilon Armon's being, but only recently has it become a major part of his work as a designer. Eilon is bothered by the "disrespect" for old objects by people around him. The insignificance of replacing good and useful products, chasing after new and updated products, make him think of what can be done with all the "material" thrown away - usually his motives are sentimental.

14. Zivia, Sustainable Design & Consultancy

Designer: Zivia

"UPside Down, Objects from the OTHER direction." Zivia, Sustainable Design and Consultancy studio (Concepts, small editions and private Fashion), believes that good design can push the viewer/user to participate in a revolution and define stronger spaces by pointing on new or hidden concepts and turning them into a different reality. Zivia has a MA in Social Design, is a senior lecturer in the Industrial Design Department and at the Jewelry and Fashion Department at the Bezalel Academy of Art and Design.

15. Tal Gur Design

Designer: Tal Gur

<http://www.talgur.com>

Tal Gur (b. 1962), a graduate of Bezalel's Department of Industrial Design, 1996, became known in the last decade as one of Israel's prominent designers in the area of plastic light fixtures and objects manufactured in the rotational molding technology.

Some of the objects are produced as "home industry" in the studio at Kibbutz Gilgal in the Jordan Valley. Ever since he first embarked on his journeys to the Far East in 2000, particularly to Japan, Gur has been exploring various areas of craft in domains where design forms an integral part in a dynamic texture of life-culture.

Information for the Public:

Location: Design Exchange (DX), 234 Bay Street, TD Centre, Toronto Canada

Hours: Mon-Fri 10:00a.m. – 5:00p.m. Sat/Sun 12:00p.m.-5:00p.m.

Museum Admission: \$10 Adult, \$8 Student/Senior, DX members free admission

The public may call 416. 216. 2160 for Museum information or visit www.dx.org

For images or additional information please contact:

Cindy Grenke, Director of Development, cindy@dx.org or 416. 216. 2134