

Ronan & Erwan Bouroullec

For Ronan et Erwan Bouroullec, working with galleries is a chance to breathe outside the usual constraints that characterise their enthusiastic contribution to industrial design. Their need to go “over the top” shows their almost childlike joy in escaping the ties that bind them when working on a brief. The unique proportions of these new pieces are free from existing typologies and domestic conventions. They free themselves from defined and definitive shapes.

Exhibition:

from January 26th
Until March 8th 2008
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Opening reception :

Wednesday 26th January 2008
from 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.
Open Tuesday to Saturday
from 11a.m. to 7p.m.
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The Bouroullec brothers travel between the known and the unknown, moving in an « in-between » space that still leaves plenty of room for practical use.

The disturbing, long black lamp, invents a pivoting principle that leans on the ceiling. It moves like a living organism, like a three-headed hydra. The exaggerated diameter evokes the imposing size of Venetian chandeliers.

The moulded polyester tables, with their synthetic appearance, are huge monolithic shapes that are barely off the ground. Their white and unreal aspect makes them seem like floating ice floes.

The sofa – can we still refer to it as such ? – is a black box, one of the elementary shapes that Ronan et Erwan Bouroullec love so much. The intriguing shape (3m x 2m) makes us wonder about the true nature of the object. Is it a piece of furniture or an alcove? The pile of covers clears any doubts about its function: it is a place of comfort, a shelter for rest and retreat, a sort of spatial parenthesis.

Just as impressive in terms of dimension (4m wide, 2.20m high), the screen is more of a « fabric wall » than a mobile separation. One is seduced by these patches of wool in abstract, geometric, stitched shapes in clashing colours. The design of the aluminium chassis on which these huge wool covers are “placed” reminds us of a saddle maker’s workshop with skins hanging on metal trestles.

These four objects do not constitute a collection by any means as they were all designed at different times. However, they do represent the constant research of the Bouroullec brothers into the notion of the “quality of the atmosphere”. The use of fabric is one answer. In this case, it is a vehicle for colour, and the huge, flat, monochrome surfaces bring to mind abstract paintings.

After having explored a more pointillist and vibrant touch with the fabric tile Kvadrat, the two designers are today experimenting with the strict and lyrical rhythm of collections and fitted shapes, associated with layers of colour. Ettore Sottsass said “Colour is life”. Ronan Bouroullec ironically says that “colour is as complicated as life”. In any case, the two brothers refuse to invent any kind of theory on the subject.

They tame colour with method, letting themselves be guided by their intuition. This is a delight and an open door every time as their aesthetic visibly gathers strength.



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