

# Galerie kreO

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## "frozen in time" Wieki Somers

Exhibition:  
Galerie kreO  
January 30th 2010  
to March 20th 2010

Opening night:  
January 30th 2010  
from 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.  
Opening hours:  
Tuesday to Saturday  
from 11:00 a.m. until 7:00  
p.m.



*Exhibition made  
possible by the  
Mondriaan Foundation*



Mondriaan Stichting  
(Mondriaan Foundation)

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### "FROZEN IN TIME"

Flowering sprigs seem to merge with a lamp, the construction of stools is hiding within a transparent skin and branches bow under the weight of icy layers, seemingly for a few moments only. The objects look like frozen moments in time. They are wellknown in their functionality – lamps, stools, vases – but mysterious in their connections of contrasting elements and their silent appearance.

#### Inspiration

The inspiration for the project was taken from the photographs of a natural phenomenon that struck the North East of the Netherlands on March 2nd 1987, when twenty to thirty millimetres of icy rain poured down from the sky. The glazed frost brought public life to a complete standstill and produced a layer of ice on everything it landed on, branches of trees, lampposts, clotheslines from which drops of ice were drooping. The half-transparent ice connected things in a matter-of-fact and extremely poetic way. For one day the sidewalk, bicycles and trees merged into one, while cars seemed to stick to the streets for ever. Only one day. When the ice started to melt down trees could continue to grow their blossoms and cars could persue their tours.

What struck us at first was the formal, visual beauty. Wellknown forms, hiding beneath a transparent skin, had gained a melancholy glow. But there was more. On a deeper level the items seemed to have turned into tales from another, yet familiar world. Through the metamorphosis, caused by nature, the strangely familiar items seemed to communicate something which had always been there and was only waiting to be unveiled. Paradoxically the cover of ice caused a dis-covering. This very tension between down to earth familiarity and meanings hiding underneath the skin of products is a theme which surfaces in almost all the designs of Studio Wieki Somers, for instance in High Tea Pot, Bathboat and the Merry-go-round Coat rack designed for Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen Rotterdam. Also the way to produce the subtle merging of functionality and poetry – for instance by freezing a process or by connecting things through an extra layer - can be seen in works like Blossoms, Mattress Stone Bottle and Departed Glory. Wieki Somers: "I have always been interested in the character and possibilities of materials, in which I believe stories are hiding that can be liberated, much in the tradition of what the classical sculptors claimed to do. Wasn't it Michelangelo who said the figures were waiting in the marble to be released by the artist? Comparable to that idea I was always convinced that materials and techniques have an inner meaning."

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### Meaning and means

When Wieki Somers studied at Design Academy Eindhoven (late 90's), having a concept was considered to be priority number one. The students were educated by the first generation Dutch designers who had won world fame in the world with conceptual design. The overall atmosphere was focussed on defining the why of design and not so much the how. But from the very start Wieki Somers was convinced that the making itself also counted. "In our work the hidden qualities of materials emerge through an elaborate process of intuitive experimentation, both with age old crafts and state-of-the-art industrial techniques. We always start by researching in depth the tactile, visual and functional meanings of materials and techniques, the historical references and the cultural contexts that adhere to them. As sources of inspiration habits and the everyday world of common objects play a large role, as well as the intriguing processes of nature. I believe people can cherish objects only if their innermost experiences are somehow linked to them. That is why I feel objects should convey the idea of memory, the idea of a world beyond bare functionality and beyond first appearances. We want to transfer the well-known by asking unusual questions, in order to trigger the imagination of the user and discover the un-known. Natural processes are a great source of inspiration to do so. After all, nature has no strict rules and rational reasons for its existence. Mystery is unquestioned. And beauty can simply be. Have you ever seen an ugly tree?"

### The process

"Ice preserves, conserves, protects, eternalizes. After the ice has melted life continues. A frozen item is still, white, encircled by silence, while within one suspects a vibrant life, waiting for the ice to melt down. A moment in time. A moment within a process. For 'frozen in Time' we searched for a material which would have the appeal and the workings of ice. UV Topcoat, a liquid resin, is a fluid material in which items can be dipped while kept in the dark. After exposing it to the sunlight the material will 'freeze' into a solid hard layer. Besides its esthetic qualities the UV Topcoat can bind several elements and strengthen constructions of many kinds. The result is a covered world which uncovers the mysteries that hide within everyday objects."

Text: Louise Schouwenberg

Studio Wieki Somers is a collaboration between Wieki Somers and Dylan van den Berg.

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Exposition :  
Galerie kreO  
du 30 janvier 2010  
au 20 mars 2010

Vernissage  
le samedi 30 janvier 2010  
de 16h à 21h  
Ouverture du mardi au samedi  
de 11h à 19h

1	2	3	
4	5	6	7
8	9	10	
11	12	13	

- 1 - FROZEN LAMP
- 2 - FROZEN LANTERN
- 3 - FROZEN REED LAMP
- 4 - FROZEN HOGWEED VASE
- 5 - FROZEN CARAFE
- 6 - FROZEN LEAF VASE
- 7 - BIG FROZEN VASE
- 8 - FROZEN SQUARE HOGWEED TABLE
- 9 - FROZEN CABINET
- 10- FROZEN ROUND HOGWEED TABLE
- 11 - FROZEN BULB LAMP
- 12 - FROZEN STOOL
- 13 - FROZEN SPRING LAMP

