

LDF/CONTINUED

Certain elements of the London Design Festival had a distinctly scaled-down feeling to them this year: no Trafalgar Square centrepiece, few other larger features (save for the Endless Stair on the South Bank) and much less at the V&A to marvel at. This was really surprising given so much talk of an economic recovery.

So what went right for LDF in 2013? Shows such as 100% Design (where

footfall has increased by a third in two years) and Designjunction, plus the streets of east London were busy, filled with a mix of emerging brands as well as the bigger manufacturers. LDF's real strength, aside from its participants' ability to mix work with partying and still turn up ready to take those sales orders the next day, is its DIY ethos. Not got a manufacturer to take on your work? Not a problem, we'll just

produce it ourselves until someone takes notice. No permanent space of your own to show your wares? Fine, we'll just pop up and make it happen.

It is this resilience and can-do attitude that sets the UK apart on the global design scene right now. It's no wonder that international brands like Hay, Moooi and Bernhardt Design made such an effort to be part of proceedings.



CENTRAL LONDON/CONT

ASSEMBLYROOM ^

Assemblyroom has rather cornered the market in curvy, contemporary soft seating and the design practice looks set to build on that success with a series of new products. The Hatton armchair and two-seater sofa (pictured) are constructed using an FSC timber frame, and feature two-tone upholstery for a look that is modern yet not too

look-at-me. The firm also showed the Hyde bench, a lightweight piece of seating that's frameless thanks to some clever moulded foam. It can be stacked away when not in use. The bench follows on from Assemblyrooms's smaller Hyde stacking stool, which is now available in a special edition featuring wool fabric from Bailey Hills.



BLUE MARMALADE ^

Scottish design studio Blue Marmalade sets great stall by its eco-credentials – sustainable materials, local production, reusing production cast-offs and flat-pack transportation – but its latest product, Halo, more than holds its own in terms of technology too. The design

does away with the circuit board and instead LEDs are embedded in an optical gel. This not only allows the head of the lamp to be incredibly thin, but it also means that the same light source can be used for directional light below the fitting as well as ambient light above it.

LITTLE SHED COLLECTIVE v

This new studio's founders, industrial designers Keith Orchard and Alex Wastney, both grew up in rural New Zealand and the company moniker references where their first design experiments were honed in their youth. Now based in London, the pair's initial launches include the desirable Dusk lamp (not to be

confused with Copper's light of the same name on p21). This ambient lighting system consists of a modular LED panel featuring bespoke etchings against an illuminated natural timber backdrop. It is also available on a larger scale as wall panelling, which would work well as a feature wall in a reception or meeting room.



CENTRAL LONDON

WRONG FOR HAY

An introduction through this month's onoffice cover star Stefan Diez led to designer Sebastian Wrong meeting Rolf and Mette Hay, whose eponymous Danish brand has been a reliable source of well-crafted, confident designs for a decade now. The end result, many months later, was new sub-brand Wrong for Hay, launched during this year's LDF.

"It's not a capsule collection, it's a much more substantial exercise, separate but within the Hay family," explains Wrong, the brand's design director. "There's a common thread running through the entire collection: a simplicity of form and honesty of materials." With its pale wood and gentle curves, there is a distinctly Scandinavian vibe to the product offering, with Wrong's ability to assemble an arsenal of assured contemporary designers including Diez, Bertjan Pot and Sylvain Willenz, honed no doubt during his time at Established and Sons. Other collaborators – such as Norwegian

collective Anderssen and Voll (responsible for the Elephant table) and Sweden's Shane Schneck, who presented one of the most contract-orientated pieces, the Trion trestle table – are more on the cusp of international recognition. There are a number of in-house designs, including the Hackney sofa, presented in a vivid yellow at the brand's launch at a beautiful Georgian house in St James's, and the Sinker light.

While cushions might not be onoffice's core interest, there's no ignoring the power of Nathalie du Pasquier's patterns, used to vibrant effect when upholstered on the Curve chair, which again could pack a punch in a contract environment such as a lobby or touchdown space. Wrong admires the way that Danish design hero Arne Jacobsen created designs for specific commissions (such as the Swan and Egg chairs) that went on to standalone success and hopes to do the same for Wrong for Hay. A business brain and a creative vision? Sounds like a recipe for things going right.

Above left The Sinker light, one of Wrong for Hay's in-house design offerings

Left Cork Cone, by onoffice's favourite office accessories designers, Daniel Emma

Below left The Revolver stool by Leon Ransmeier rotates 360° with the footrest

Below centre Sweden's Shane Schneck's Trion table, a pared-down trestle table

Below right Neu, a moulded plastic shell chair with legs in timber or bent steel

JOINED AND JOINED v

Joined and Joined is a competitively priced new venture from designer Samuel Chan, who previously set up furniture brand Channels. Chan has enlisted an impressive roster of fellow designers including Wales and Wales and Freshwest, who all

share a passion for craft. Given this fact, it's no surprise that Simon Pengelly is involved too: his Concave bookcase (pictured), in oak or walnut, is quite breathtaking in construction, and you could readily imagine it gracing a library area or reception.



EAST LONDON

DESIGN BY NICO

Having studied in Amsterdam and spent time in Singapore, designer Nicolette de Waart, the name behind Design by Nico, now calls south London home. Her writing desk is a hardwearing, classic design that works equally well in the home or in the office; made from a mix of solid oak and Corian, it's available with straight or flared legs.



STAHL+STEINNES

We never tire of desks with clean lines and room to store your favourite things in a neat and tidy fashion. Bump, by Norway's Stahl+Steinnes, is a simple construction with space to hold your best writing implement beneath a rubber band on the desktop, plus room to hang magazines underneath.



DANIEL SCHOFIELD

Products where the name rhymes get bonus points in our book, but that's not the only reason we love Daniel Schofield's Tool stool. We're also rather taken with its brass rivet detailing on the legs and the surface of the seat – inspired by the way that knives and other tools with blades are fixed to their handles.



ORÉE

Natural materials meet high technology at French firm Orée. After launching its first keyboards in maple and walnut a year ago, the design studio has now revealed the Touch Slab, a multi-touch wireless trackpad. Like boring old non-wooden trackpads it replaces your mouse with dragging and swiping finger

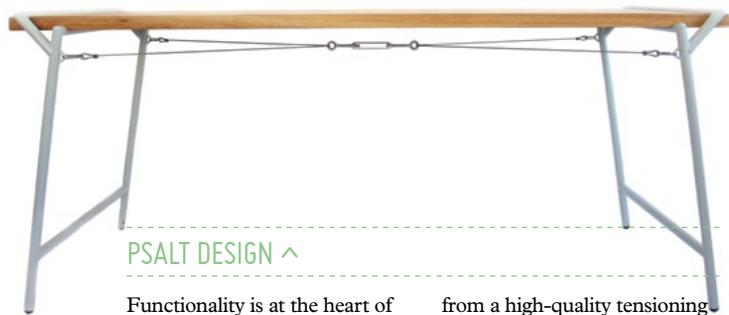
gestures, and can also be used as a numerical keypad. Meanwhile, the innocuous looking Orée Wireless Power Pebble is in fact a charging base for smartphones which is available in wood (lime or walnut) or in red or white marble. So there's no need for unsightly chargers now that there's a design-led option.



PSALT DESIGN ^

Functionality is at the heart of Psalt Design's Atlas Series. Working equally well as a studio desk or dining table, the table (pictured) is inspired by industrial fixtures and fittings in everyday surroundings, with the piece's strength coming

from a high-quality tensioning system. Its matching bench uses sustainable materials including a solid oak top. For simplicity, the whole bench is composed of just three components, making for easy storage as a flat pack.



BARNBY & DAY <

Continuing the trend for all things timber, Barnby & Day present the Apex desk, made from oak and sycamore, with other timber combinations available on request. As well as providing ample workspace, its intelligent frame design with incorporated storage makes a clutter-free office a possibility.

