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design*

BELGIAN MATTERS

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palazzo litta
12-17.04.2016
design week
milan*

PRESS RELEASE

A Matter of Perception : Tradition & Technology
Palazzo Litta — Corso Magenta 24, Milan
Open daily : 11am-9pm
Press preview : 11 April, 3-7pm
Opening reception : 12 April, 7-12pm

an initiative by

Belgium is Design
belgiumisdesign.be

exhibition concept

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BELGIAN MATTERS

For Milan Design Week 2016, the organisations and institutions that support and promote Belgian design under the collective name Belgium is Design, have joined forces with the international contemporary culture magazine DAMN°. Taking part in the group event A Matter of Perception: Tradition & Technology at the Palazzo Litta, the seventh edition of Belgium is Design's presentation in Milan, Belgian Matters, features the results of pairings between 13 designers and companies, the latter often coming from sectors far removed from that of furniture design. Each project has been commissioned especially for the event and will be seen for the first time during the Salone.

For DAMN° and its partner Mosca it is a return to the 17th-century Palazzo Litta, having hosted A Matter of Perception: Products & Materials at the location in 2015. Centrally situated on the Corso Magenta, it is a place filled but not overwhelmed by centuries-old stories of the people engaged in culture, politics, economics and the art of socialising that have passed through its doorways. This time DAMN°, an independent publication founded in Belgium 11 years ago, invites Diébédo Francis Kéré to reflect on A Matter of Perception. The Berlin-based architect, who was born in Burkina Faso, transforms the courtyard into Neo-Africana: a meeting pavilion, which celebrates and animates the timely and timeless themes of tradition and technology, alongside a series of talks and activities that includes live-interviews with the Belgian contributors. It is within this context that Belgium is Design has worked closely with DAMN° in selecting and

matching the participants for Belgian Matters, who come from all three regions of Belgium (Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia) and occupy three rooms of the Palazzo. The partnerships have been forged and supported by Belgium is Design and present a series of ad-hoc products and prototypes that stress confrontations and commonalities between designers and manufacturers, as they work both with their fields of expertise but also outside their normal experiences. Designers use a range of materials (bluestone, leather and wood) or techniques (glass blowing, tapestry and tanning) with different degrees of familiarity. However, for the mix of manufacturers, artisans, industrial producers and research centres, it is often the first opportunity to experiment and encounter design as a collaborative act or in a way that expands and exploits the potential of their role beyond that of a supplier of materials or the tools of production. What links these diverse approaches and mixed typologies (accessories, small objects or furniture) is the emphasis on the creation of each project, the process of making and mutual learning, and the dialogue that has arisen out of these carefully crafted relationships.

Thomas Lommée & Christiane Högner, who are participating as designers, are also responsible for the scenography and Kidnap Your Designer is the team behind the graphic design of the Belgium is Design 2016 edition. Ultimately it's all about connections, from the content to the setting: this is Belgian design, made in Belgium, but decidedly for the world and uninhibited by borders of experience.

DESIGNERS PRODUCERS

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Ben Storms + Het Glazen Huis
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Unfold + Materialise & glass manufacturer tbc
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Mathias van de Walle + Ralph Baggaley
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PRESS SERVICE

A press kit, which includes details of each project and hi-res images, is available to download at the Belgium is Design website from 16 February 2016.
belgiumisdesign.be/press

For further information and to arrange interviews with the organisers and participants, please see the contacts below.

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BELGIUM IS DESIGN

Belgium is Design is a common label that unites the actions of regional organisations WBDM (Wallonie-Bruxelles Design Mode), Design Flanders and Brussels Invest & Export. This joined-up approach has been active since 2011, stimulating and developing initiatives to showcase Belgium's designers, manufacturers and producers in foreign markets.

belgiumisdesign.be

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