

# MONOCLE

## 1 Agenda

- Fertility incentives in Asia
- Bridging divides in India
- Africa's UN Security seat
- Time to charge the tuk-tuk?

## 2 Global views

- Asean: the inside story
- The Cannes-do developers
- Making it in Mexico City
- Top culture Down Under

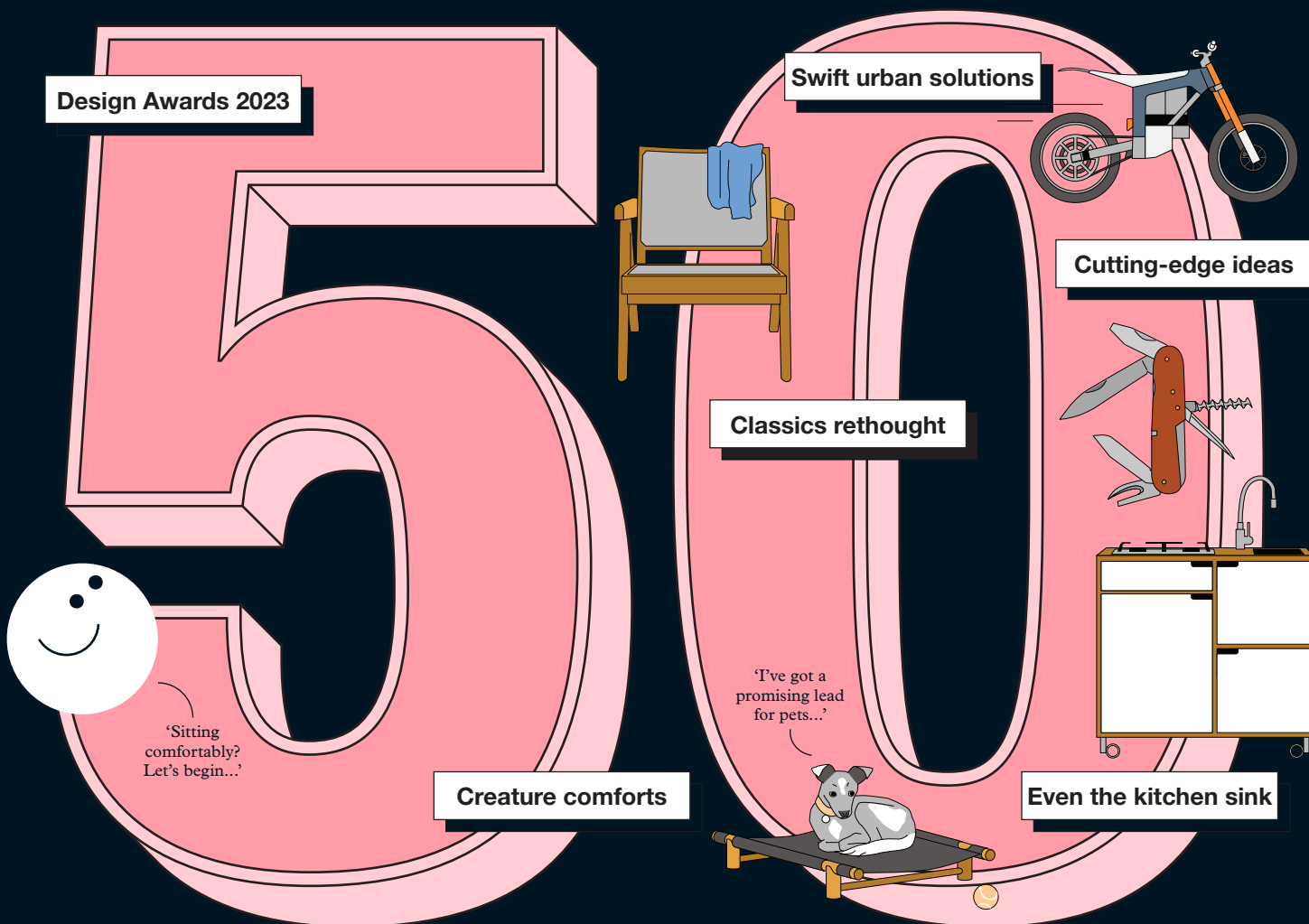
## 3 Inventory

- Amsterdam's lakeside inn
- Time to reimagine the riad
- A new Swiss food manifesto
- Fresh finds and tasty recipes

It's time to rethink, redraft and refine

INSIDE: *The architects, makers and ateliers on the up and building better.*

# Design Top Fifty



**2 DESIGN:** Awards

# Lines of best fit

## *Global*

For the third annual Monocle Design Awards, we've scoured the globe for the best in architecture, furniture, graphic design and more, to celebrate projects improving our lives – while looking good.

EDITED BY  
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STILL LIVES  
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# I.

**TIDIEST TWO-WHEELER**

## Kalk & by Cake *Sweden*

“I was a motorcycle hater,” says Stefan Ytterborn. That is, before the Swedish entrepreneur tried a few electric ones and got so hooked that he decided to design his own. Cake’s first model, Kalk, put competitors to shame with a design weighing 40 per cent less than the average motorbike. In 2021 Cake started shipping out Kalk &, an upgrade engineered for both commutes and off-road escapades. “During the week you ride the bike from home to work, and during the weekend you bring it out to the countryside,” says Ytterborn. “It’s something to use every day.” — SRO  
[ridecake.com](http://ridecake.com)







## 2.

**SHARPEST SHOOTER**

### Leica M6 Germany

Ditch your DSLR or smartphone because shooting on film is well and truly back, following German manufacturer Leica's relaunch of its iconic M6 analogue film camera.

Designed in the 1980s, it still feels contemporary, thanks to its compact size and quiet shutter. As per Leica tradition, the new models will be handmade in Germany. The likes of Bruce Davidson, William Klein and Nan Goldin have all shot with the camera, meaning that any user is at least heading in the right direction when it comes to taking masterful photographs. — MPB [leica-camera.com](http://leica-camera.com)

## 3.

**BEST AT GOING GREEN**

### Urban Farming Office by VTN Architects Vietnam

Vietnam is one of the world's rapidly developing economies and hyper-urban Ho Chi Minh City bustles with new skyscrapers and building projects, meaning that designers need to find savvy ways to introduce greenery into a growing concrete jungle. For an example of how to do this well, look to Urban Farming Office by VTN Architects. Its concrete frame is wrapped in vines, palms and trees, blanketing the building's southern walls. Tucked in behind these larger plants is a vertical farm of local and organic herbs, fruits and vegetables that are planted in modular boxes that can be easily shifted around for sowing and harvesting. A rainwater-irrigation system feeds the greenery, which provides a pleasant microclimate and leafy shade for the open-plan offices inside, reducing the need for energy-intensive air conditioning. The project is an outstanding showcase of beauty and practicality, with VTN Architects eschewing the typically ornamental nature of outdoor green walls in favour of greenery that not only improves the building's sustainability credentials but provides produce for its tenants too. — NXE [vtmarchitects.net](http://vtmarchitects.net)



## 4.

**BEST IN THE BATHROOM**

### Roca Nu tap Spain

This collection of taps, designed by Valencian studio Inma Bermúdez for Spain's Roca, includes three different handles – pin, dome and striped – attached to the thinnest possible body and plumbing connections for both space efficiency and to cut down on any unnecessary material usage. Available in six colours, the bold shapes will inject a sense of style and joy into any bathroom. — CJ [roca.com](http://roca.com)



## 5.

**BEST BOAT**

### Toy 36 Fly by Toymarine Italy

Yacht design today often leaves us cold with styling that strays from maritime references and cabins that mimic the interiors of a Manhattan loft. Ligurian boatyard Toy Marine has found the right formula with its chic range of day cruisers that update the silhouette of Maine lobster boats from the 1930s with a touch of Italian flair. Its newest addition to the fleet, the Toy 36 Fly, is no exception. A natural evolution of the boatyard's classic 36-footer (11 metres), the new launch features a second wheelhouse on the fly to offer a wider field of view and make navigating tricky coastlines easier. "It's a classic design with a lot of appeal that never goes out of fashion," says Toy Marine co-founder Aldo Tomasina. The versatility of the boat is also a draw, with owners able to use it as an overnight cruiser, a tender to support superyachts or as fast commuters to arrive at the office in style. — IC [toymarine.it](http://toymarine.it)

PHOTOGRAPHER: Lauryn Ibiak

## 6.

**BEST BOUTIQUE**

### Asaru Studio Singapore

Asaru means "to forage", which captures this shop's approach. Bonsais and volcanic rock furnish the space, with steam rising from bamboo baskets in which *wagashi* (Japanese confectionery) is warmed. Owners Hui Shan Pang and Vincent Teng (pictured) receive customers as guests, blurring the line between retail and hospitality. — YX [asarustudio.com](http://asarustudio.com)







# 8.

**BEST COMMUNITY CONNECTOR**  
**Mobile Makers**  
*US*

Mobile Makers is the brainchild of architect Maya Bird-Murphy who, with a small team, visits schools and hosts workshops in underserved communities in Chicago with a colourful truck retrofitted as a design studio and learning laboratory on wheels. The team's aim? "It's broad: it's about giving kids life skills," says Bird-Murphy. "A teenager who comes through Mobile Makers, and can now work a bandsaw, can get a job in a carpenters' workshop. Others might just realise that design is fun." This ambition is a reminder that raising the profile of design and educating young people about architecture can have an effect beyond simply enticing people to work in the profession. — [WH mobilemakers.org](#)



# 7.

**BEST FOR THE TERRACE**  
**Crate by Rietveld Originals × Hay**  
*The Netherlands*

In 1934, Dutch designer Gerrit Rietveld built a furniture collection from wooden shipping crates that was honest and affordable. The collection has now been revived thanks to Rietveld Originals and Denmark's Hay. Solid pine, treated with a water-based lacquer, the crate's lounge chairs are equally comfortable indoors or out. — [JSI rietveldoriginals.com](#)



# 9.

**BEST SMALL GALLERY**  
**Denis Goldberg House**  
by Noero Architects  
*South Africa*

Designing an art and education centre in Cape Town dedicated to anti-apartheid activist Denis Goldberg is no small task. But architect Jo Noero, who knew the late Goldberg personally, tried to capture what he would have wanted architecturally. "Denis was trained as a civil engineer. He was very straightforward and he hated luxury," says Noero, who used basic materials that could be manipulated to appear luxurious. The result is a collection of mostly white buildings that are a shining showcase of how to make the simple feel glorious. — [MHO noeroarchitects.com](#)

# 10.

**BEST ECOLOGICAL EFFORT**  
**Grand Junction Park and Plaza**  
by David Rubin Land Collective  
*US*

This new park near Indianapolis used to flood during heavy rain before it was stabilised. "With a riparian corridor of plants, there is a system in place to handle overflow, making this a far more resilient area," says Land Collective founder David Rubin. — [WH land-collective.com](#)



# 11.

**TOP RESTORATION EFFORT**  
**Ipiranga Museum** by H+F Arquitetos  
*Brazil*

Built on the site where Brazil's independence from Portugal was declared in 1822, this museum has been renovated by São Paulo-based studio H+F Arquitetos. The outcome is an expansion and restoration effort that allows existing features, such as the museum's iconic façade, to retain pride of place. — [CAG hf.arq.br](#)

# 12.

**BEST IN TIMBER**  
**Küng Holzbau**  
by Seiler Linhart Architects  
*Switzerland*

The office and gallery for Swiss timber company Küng Holzbau is made from moon wood (timber cut in winter just before the new moon rises). Stephan Küng, second-generation woodworker and co-owner, says that it's more resistant: "There's no metal, no glue, no chemical building materials. It's just pure, solid, moon wood." — [SRO seilerlinhart.ch](#)



# 13.

**LEADING WAYFINDING**  
**Collingwood Yards**  
by The Company You Keep  
*Australia*

This arts precinct is always in flux, so it needed a flexible brand and wayfinding system. The Company You Keep collaborated with designer Jordan Rowe and type specialist Vincent Chan of Matter of Sorts to create a system of screw-on nameplates and wayfinding signage for easy updating. The result is practical, versatile and sleek. — [YX tcyk.com.au](#)



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Tom Harris, Paris Brummer, Nelson Kon, Tom Ross





## I4.

LEADING EDITORIAL DESIGN  
**Studio Joost Grootens**  
*The Netherlands*

Joost Grootens is one of the world's best book designers, as proved by his studio's collaboration with Dutch Van Dale Publishers on the 16th edition and 150th anniversary of the Big Dictionary of the Dutch Language. The attention to detail in the three volumes extends to the colour palette used for idioms on page: a warm grey for technical information, blue for etymology and pink for illustrations that deepen the understanding of language. In a world that relies on the internet, flicking through a beautifully designed book can offer more than definitions; it's a beautiful reading experience too. — AAL [joostgrootens.nl](http://joostgrootens.nl)

## I5.

TOP TEMPORARY ACTIVATION  
**Mané Market by Bloco Arquitetos**  
*Brazil*

Built for the Pan American games in 2007, this structure was out of use prior to the intervention of Brasilia-based studio Bloco Arquitetos, which was founded by Daniel Mangabeira, Henrique Coutinho and Matheus Seco. The firm has transformed the site into the Mercado Mané, an open-air food market with a stunning canopy, breezy interiors and lots of green space. Global sporting events and conventions can leave white elephants in host cities but this is a reminder that sites post-event – or ones waiting for a new build – don't necessarily have to sit empty. — CAG [bloco.arq.br](http://bloco.arq.br)



## I8.

BEST NEW SHOWROOM  
**V-Zug showroom**  
*in Paris*  
*France*

The challenge with conventional kitchen showrooms is that you can't actually use the appliances on display – unless of course you're visiting a space run by Swiss firm V-Zug. Its new outpost in Paris showcases a range of the Swiss company's premium appliances, including impressive mirror-glassed combi-steamer cookers. Yet the studio offers more than sleek displays: it hosts regular lunchtime cooking workshops run by chefs that allow guests to see the appliances in action and actually use them too, all while also learning to cook. It's a recipe for success that more retailers should follow. — ABC [vzug.com](http://vzug.com)



## I6.

BEST IN BRICK  
**Localworks**  
*Uganda*

Kampala-based architecture practice Localworks has mastered the use of materials native to their sites, including bricks made from local clay. Bricks can ground a project in its location and also helps to create buildings that, according to the team, “virtually don't age, despite their dusty or muddy environments”. — PMO [localworks.ug](http://localworks.ug)

## I7.

PREFERRED PRODUCTION COMPANY  
**Shelter**  
*Australia*

Tired of the dull ubiquity of home renovation-focused television programmes, entrepreneurs and design enthusiasts Dustin and Camille Clare established Shelter, an Australian streaming service devoted to the celebration of good design. Since launching in 2020, the network has broadened its scope beyond its initial antipodean focus with an impressive and acclaimed line-up of original programming, covering everything from urban renewal public projects in Mexico City to remote cabins in Australia (pictured). There's also a tight roster of curated series and films, including glossy retrospectives on titans such as Renzo Piano and Zaha Hadid, debates on the future of prefab housing and dispatches on design's emerging luminaries. The result is a streaming service that fits an important gap in the market. It's why we're tuning in. — CMC [watch.shelter.stream](http://watch.shelter.stream)



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Will Boase, Jonas Margriet





Design Awards  
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## 19.

**BEST RESTAURANT DESIGN**  
**Brutus** by Sandra Tarruella Interioristas  
*Spain*

In a confident nod to brutalism, designer Sandra Tarruella has taken the bare bones of this structure in Palma de Mallorca – a waffle-slab concrete ceiling,

weathered cement columns, exposed bricks and pipes – and transformed them into features. The gridded ceiling becomes a clever magnifier of downlights, while warmth emanates from the smaller details. But what truly gives this restaurant a sense of warmth and movement is the open kitchen, against the back wall, where the food spectacle comes alive atop a stone benchtop that appears almost like a stage. — *LA tarruellainterioristas.com*

## 20.

**BEST BRAND COLLABORATION**  
**Odakyu Railway saké** by Agnavi  
*Japan*

Food and drink start-up Agnavi and its Ichi-Go-Can brand now sell limited-edition saké produced by makers around the Odakyu Railway lines, with cans designed to look like trains. It's a perfect partnership between contents and packaging. — *JT ichi-go-can.jp*



## 21.

**OUTSTANDING OUTDOOR EFFORT**  
**Chop** by Philippe Malouin  
for Hem  
*Sweden*

The Chop collection – which includes chairs and tables in a range of finishes – is built to last, yet light enough to stack and move around, making it a flexible and winning outdoor set. — *ABC hem.com, philippemalouin.com*



## 22.

**BEST IN THE KITCHEN**  
**Tinyküche**  
*Switzerland*

Kitchens and small spaces can lead to a mishmash of dysfunctional furniture – a problem that Swiss firm Tinyküche's free-standing kitchenette solves. Created by Swiss designer Stefan Senn in collaboration with industrial designer Robert Pludra, the kitchenettes are manufactured in Basel by Senn's furniture company Wohn Geist and his five-person team. The versatile modular design allows for customisation and can include a stove, oven and other appliances, making it a perfect fit for a variety of spaces. Available in two sizes and several natural finishes, Tinyküche integrates all the features necessary for easy cooking in a compact space. In fact, it does this so effectively that we wouldn't blame anyone for downsizing their kitchen just to install one. — *AAL tinykueche.ch*



PHOTOGRAPHER: Anthony Perez



## 23.

**BEST PLAYSPACE**  
**Tophane Park** by Carve  
*Turkey*

This playground in Istanbul's Tophane Park taps into traditional Turkish craftsmanship. Amsterdam-based design studio Carve used local materials and integrated stone-carving and wood-carpentry techniques to make a sculpted play area. — *LMT carve.nl*

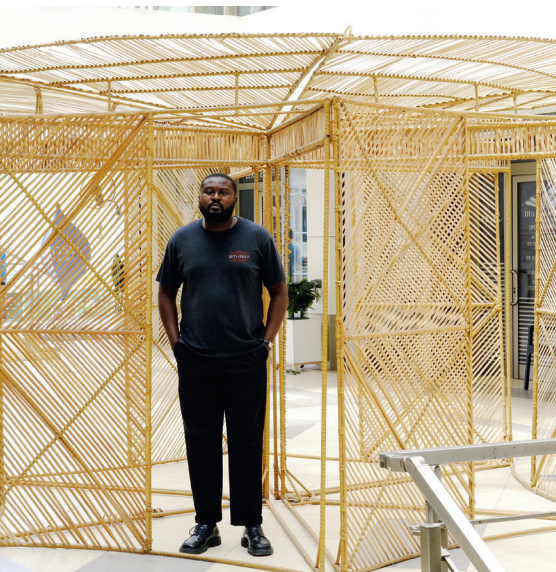
## 24.

**MOST PRACTICAL TOOL**  
**Replica 1897** by Victorinox  
*Switzerland*

Celebrating the 125th anniversary of Victorinox's Swiss Army Knife, this model features the same tools with certain specifications updated (such as a stainless steel blade). It's hard to improve on a classic but this proves that it's possible. — *JSI victorinox.com*





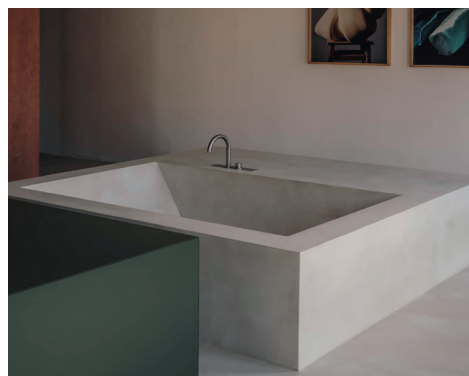


## 25.

EMERGING DESIGNER

### Nifemi Marcus-Bello Nigeria

Lagos-based Nifemi Marcus-Bello became known for his geometric, colourful stools and is widely recognised as one of the people shaping Nigeria's design scene. His talent lies in his diverse design language: he pays homage to both the old and contemporary Nigeria with his work, while also incorporating inspiration from around the globe. "My process is fluid and contextual," says Marcus-Bello (*pictured*), who recently made his US debut with an exhibition in Los Angeles. "If there's a problem that needs to be solved, I think about how design can be used to solve it." Expect to see more of his work in galleries and taking centre-stage in Triennales and Biennales. — MHO [nmbello.com](http://nmbello.com)



## 27.

BEST RENOVATION

### Vasto Gallery by Mesura Spain

Barcelona-based architecture studio Mesura has deftly transformed an entire floor of a former warehouse in the city into a stylish home-cum-gallery. The architects have stripped back the building to expose the original curved steel beams, while a tall, wooden partition divides the space in two; the owner's apartment is on one side and their gallery, Vasto, on the other. Mesura's designs walk the line between pared-back and cosy. The result is a comfortable and contemporary environment that doesn't hide the building's history: something that all renovation projects could aspire to. — HU [mesura.eu](http://mesura.eu)



## 26.

BEST SIDE PIECE

### CH004 Nesting Tables by Carl Hansen & Søn Denmark

One of Danish designer Hans J Wegner's skills was in designing future-proof furniture. Over 70 years after his set of three CH004 Nesting Tables were first presented, their functional space-saving design and natural finishes are as relevant as ever. Back in production for the first time since 1970, they're now made from FSC-certified oak and walnut. "Hans J Wegner's unique ability to combine aesthetics and functionality, and his characteristic lines, is clear in the tables' minimalist yet organic design," says Knud Erik Hansen, CEO and owner of Carl Hansen & Søn. — LH [carlhansen.com](http://carlhansen.com)

## 28.

BEST URBAN PARK

### Khalifa Pocket Parks by SLA UAE

Danish architecture studio SLA's latest project in the United Arab Emirates shows that no magic tricks are needed to conjure sustainable greenery in a desert. Across six city-block-sized lots, where there was previously only sand, SLA planted 40 different native plant species, such as acacia trees, which will stay verdant with little irrigation. Slotted within the neighbourhood's existing

network of green pathways, or *sikkas*, the parks are squarely meant to serve the community: where children previously had to pile into a car to go to a playground, locals are now surrounded by green spaces with football pitches and tennis, basketball and padel courts. Since the parks opened a few months ago, data from the local sports council shows that Khalifa residents are already walking more. "It's less about what it looks like," says Rasmus Astrup, design principal at SLA. "And more important what it does." — SRO [sla.dk](http://sla.dk)



## 29.

TOP RETAIL FIT OUT

### Toteme by Halleroed USA

The global success of Stockholm-based fashion label Toteme goes beyond fashion. Founders Elin Kling and Karl Lindman (*pictured*) have been investing in physical retail and creating warm, inviting spaces where fashion meets modernist architecture. Their newest shop on New York's Mercer Street perfectly captures this creative universe. Together with Swedish architecture practice Halleroed, Kling and Lindman used the best of Scandinavian design, from lighting inspired by Gunnar Asplund to furniture by Josef Frank of Svenskt Tenn. It's an example of how fashion brands can utilise design to tell stories and keep customers coming through the door. — NT [int.toteme-studio.com](http://int.toteme-studio.com)



PHOTOGRAPHER: Ugochukwu Enebirido



# 30.

**BEST RE-EDITION**  
**Phantom Hands**  
*India*

Finding craftspeople with the know-how to make quality contemporary versions of classic designs is tricky but Bangalore-based Phantom Hands has risen to the challenge with its reproduction of Pierre Jeanneret chairs, originally created for buildings that he designed with Le Corbusier in the 1950s and 1960s in the Indian city of Chandigarh. The results are a prime example of quality craftsmanship that would do the Swiss designer proud. Founders Deepak Srinath and Aparna Rao work with more than 100 artisans at a workshop in Bangalore, making a point not only to continue to make the famous modernist chairs, but to pass on the skills, thanks to an apprenticeship programme. “It’s a way for us to go beyond family-based skilling and teach the craft to anyone who has the aptitude,” says Srinath (*pictured*). The result? Preservation of the design and the requisite craft around it. — HU [phantomhands.in](http://phantomhands.in)



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PHOTOGRAPHER: *Bhavya Ramani*



# 31.

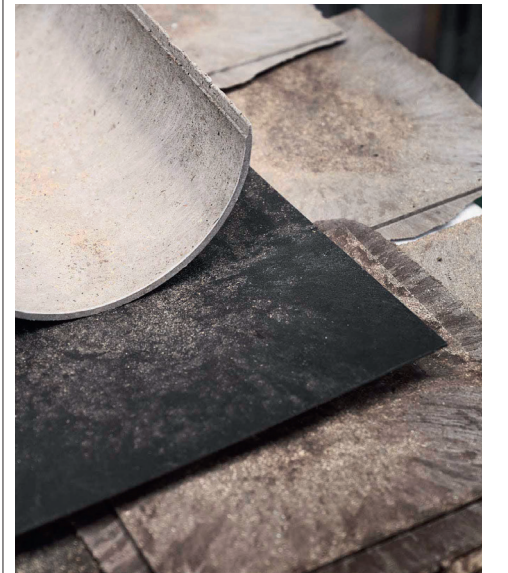
**BEST IN TEXTILES**  
**Burel Factory**  
*Portugal*

When entrepreneurs Isabel Costa and João Tomás realised that the knowledge behind Portuguese manufacturing culture was disappearing as makers moved offshore, they decided to take matters into their own hands, reviving old 19th-century weaving machines in the small village of Manteigas and opening an adjoining factory atelier in 2013. Employing local artisans, the workshop focuses exclusively on burel wool, a material that has been present in the region since the 11th century. To mark more than 10 years in business, the firm has recently launched its first clothing collection, while still producing textiles for upholstery and other uses. It’s a timely reminder that while keeping traditions alive isn’t always straightforward, investing in age-old techniques pays off. — CAG [burelfactory.com](http://burelfactory.com)

# 32.

**MOST ICONIC REIMAGINATION**  
**Rubbish by Vipp**  
*Denmark*

Vipp’s radical rethink of its 1939 pedal bin may be called “Rubbish” but design-wise, at least, it’s anything but. Made from 75 per cent recycled plastic and wood from the Danish company’s own production waste, it remakes the design icon without altering Holger Nielsen’s original design to create a waste bin from rubbish. “The best part of it is that it’s right from an environmental point of view to go this route – and it’s also beautiful,” said Kasper Egelund, CEO and third-generation owner of Vipp. Created as a special edition, with a limited production that relies on the firm’s own waste (for now at least), it’s a winning example that turns trash into something to treasure. — LHO [vipp.com](http://vipp.com)



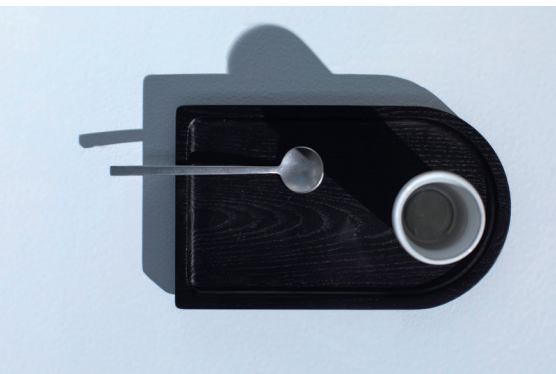


# 33.

BEST TABLE SETTING

## La Mère by Serax Belgium

La Mère, Serax's new tableware collection of ceramics, glassware and cutlery, celebrates informally coming together around the table with family and friends. Designed by Marie Michielssen, the handmade ceramic pieces turn the marks of makers into "artful flaws", calling to mind the craftspeople who worked on them and also encouraging unfussy, everyday home use. We all crave the comforts of sitting at a table with our loved ones, eating good food and enjoying the easy flow of conversation. With La Mère, Michielssen has designed a dinnerware set that is ready for such mealtimes. — NM [serax.com](http://serax.com)



# 34.

BEST CREATIVE STUDIO

## Studio Atebo Switzerland

Founded four years ago, Switzerland's Studio Atebo is a design firm specialising in locally produced wooden furniture and accessories, from rolling pins to tables via sleek shelves and stools. But it's not its product offering that's most impressive, rather that anyone (not just industry professionals) is more than welcome to make an appointment to visit its workshop in Steinach, on Lake Constance, its pop-up showroom on Zürich's Freystrasse or its studio. "We're trying to reach people that aren't necessarily design enthusiasts," says Fabio Rutishauser, Atebo's creative lead. "People visit and become interested in the products and the manufacturing." It's an admirable way to not only develop a brand following but foster appreciation for good design and craftsmanship more broadly. — GCH [studioatebo.ch](http://studioatebo.ch)

# 35.

BEST IN TYPE

## Road Research Society Hong Kong

The non-profit Road Research Society has been documenting fonts on Hong Kong's old bilingual street signs and turning them into a digital typeface. Traditionally handmade by prisoners, the Chinese characters on the signs vary in stroke and weight and are uniquely non-uniform as a result. "In 2010, Hong Kong authorities thought that some old signs in Yuen Long town were miswritten and so updated them with the 'right' character. But the signs weren't wrong, it was just an old writing style," says Gary Yau, the society's founder. "That's why I began to digitise the old characters into a typeface, reanimating this old style of writing." The result is Prison Gothic, which captures the nuances of the written Chinese language and Hong Kong's history as a British colony. In a globalised world, it's good to see type design that's rooted in place. — FMA [road.org.hk](http://road.org.hk)



# 36.

ARCHITECTS OF THE YEAR

## Snøhetta Norway

Snøhetta is the model for what a contemporary architecture studio can be. Over the past year co-founders Craig Dykers and Kjetil Traedal Thorsen have led their team on projects spanning everything from product design and graphics to architecture for retailers such as Holzweiler and a maritime centre in Denmark (pictured). — NM

### You've long worked across a range of disciplines. Why?

CRAIG DYKERS: It's about exploring the world around us. We're all from different cultures and backgrounds trying to come together. KJETIL TRÆDAL THORSEN: It's about climbing the mountain from as many sides, with as many professions and personalities as possible.

### Your work isn't overly prescriptive, leaving room for people to inhabit the resulting building. Why is this important?

THORSEN: Our projects are not complete in themselves. They're samples of possible futures and not the answer to everything. They present an opening for rethinking, redesigning and redoing. DYKERS: It's about not over-engineering every spatial condition. The best spaces allow for change: they can get messy and aren't quite perfect. But that brings variety – and that's a positive thing. [snohetta.com](http://snohetta.com)



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Samuel Schabch, Jinni Chiu

# 37.

BEST IN BEDDING

## Bold by Magniberg Sweden

Magniberg's new range of Bold blankets reaffirms the Swedish bedwear company's status as a leader in all things cosy. In line with the brand's obsession with high-quality textiles, the blankets are made using virgin wool and cut in exaggerated dimensions for extra comfort. Magniberg founders Bengt Thornefors and Nina Norgren draw from their fashion industry experience to set themselves apart, adding their flair for experimentation and creativity to the world of blankets and bedding. With Bold, as with most of their collection, the duo presents a refreshing take on everyday products for the home, showing that cosy doesn't have to be drab. — JSI [magniberg.com](http://magniberg.com)



# 38.

BEST URBAN GETAWAY

## Delica Mini by Mitsubishi Japan

Mitsubishi has partnered with camping outfitter Coleman on the Delica Mini, a miniaturised version of the Japanese automaker's famous off-road van. The new release features a roof rack, all-terrain tyres and bed kits and storage compartments. The perfect companion for escaping the urban jungle. — NM [mitsubishi-motors.com](http://mitsubishi-motors.com)





# 39.

**BEST PRODUCTION**  
**Poltrona Frau's Impact Less Leather**  
*Italy*

Amid rising concern about the sustainability of conventional leather manufacturing, Tolentino-based furniture-maker Poltrona Frau is setting an example for how to continue to use the material responsibly. It has launched a new type of leather that is made without chromium when tanning and reduces the use of chemicals by 15 per cent. Poltrona Frau's development of the trademarked material illustrates how brands can move the environmental agenda forward without having to abandon luxurious, natural materials. — NT [poltronafrau.com](http://poltronafrau.com)

# 40.

**MOST UNIFYING PROJECT**  
**Abrahamic Family House by Adjaye Associates**  
*UAE*

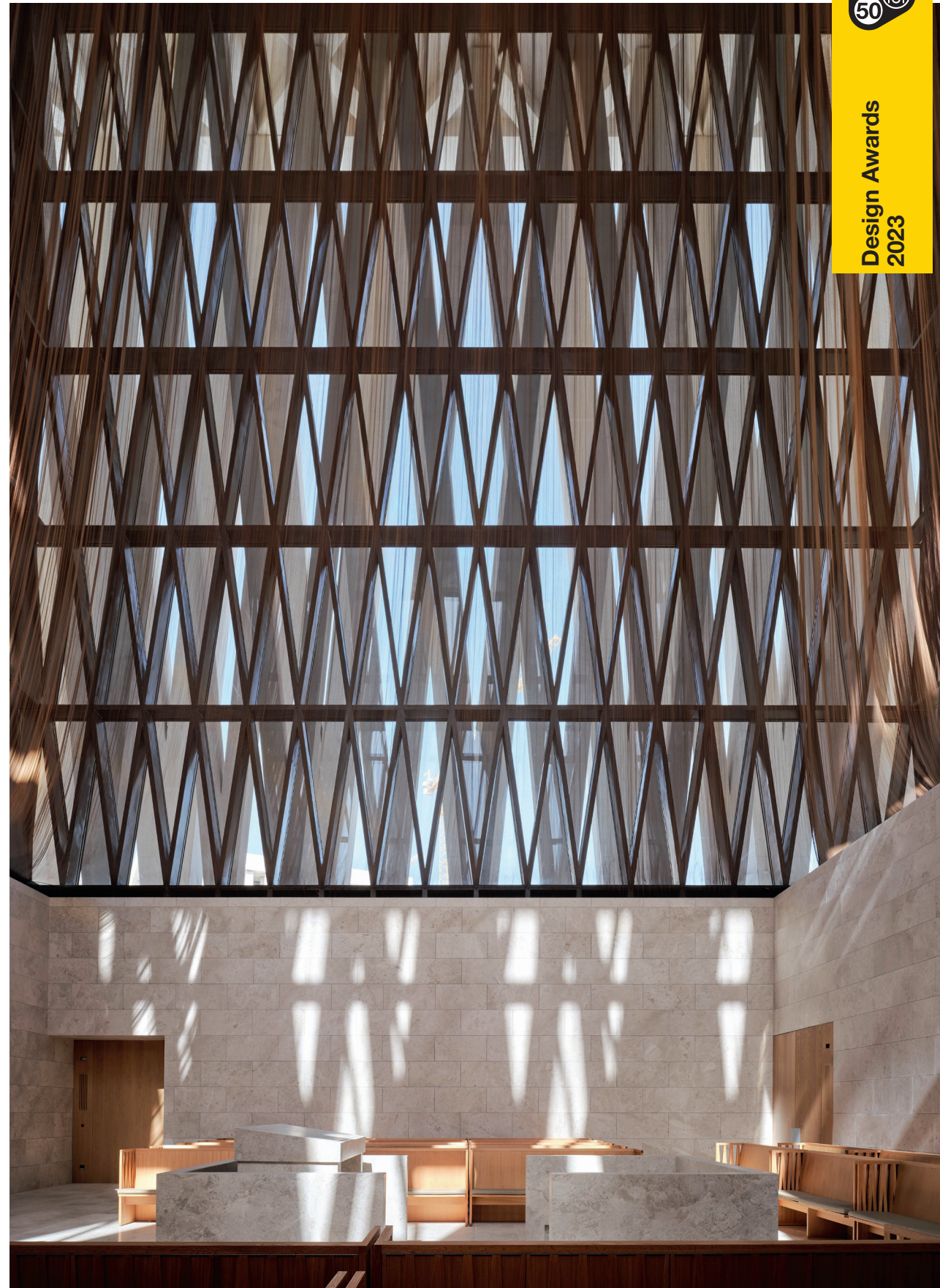
Few architectural projects could claim a goal as lofty as uniting the three major Abrahamic religions – but that is what Ghanaian-British architect David Adjaye has achieved with the design of the newly opened Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi. The interfaith complex comprises a mosque, a synagogue and a church, set around a central welcome forum and verdant elevated garden.

Tasked with creating something that honoured the specificity of each faith while emphasising their shared roots, Adjaye and his team housed each temple in an elegant cube of white stone. Countless details pay tribute to the specificity of each religion. The Eminence Ahmed El-Tayeb Mosque faces Mecca and its seven elongated external arches speak to the centrality of the number in Islam, while intricate latticework pays homage to traditional *mashrabiya* walls; the Moses Ben Maimon Synagogue looks toward Jerusalem and is layered with V-shaped columns that resemble the *sukkah*, an important structure in the Jewish festival of Sukkot; and St Francis Church is directed to the rising sun in the east – a nod to the Christian symbol of divinity – with its forest of hanging timber battens bringing to mind the solemn grandeur of a high gothic cathedral while also holding on to the tranquil simplicity of modern design.

The effect, when the three buildings are taken in at the same time, at the shared complex dotted with ghaif trees, is one of unity and visual harmony. It's a higher power we can all look up to. — NXE [adjaye.com](http://adjaye.com)



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Andrea Pugiotto, Dvor Baldinger





# 41.

**BEST DESIGN REVIVAL**  
Pira G2 by String  
Sweden

Earlier this year, Swedish furniture firm String unveiled a “new” design: a reworked shelving system originally created by Olle Pira. The updated version of the Swedish mid-century architect’s classic shelving unit from 1954 is called the Pira G2 and was created in collaboration with architect Anna von Schewen and industrial designer Björn Dahlström. Slightly wider and taller than the original, the modular design can be free-standing or mounted on a wall and comprises shelves made from lacquered steel sheets and extruded aluminium poles that provide material contrast with the white oak or walnut details. We applaud String for its ability to not only unearth and subtly rework the design but identify a product that can be used to divide and define a room. — GCH  
[stringfurniture.com](http://stringfurniture.com)



# 43.

**BRIGHTEST LIGHT**  
Fragile lamp  
by Marset  
Spain

This new table lamp made by Catalan company Marset, in collaboration with Barcelona-based designer Jaume Ramírez, is a masterful celebration of

light. Called Fragile, the lamp’s body is made completely of glass, allowing soft ambient light to diffuse atmospherically in all directions. The effect is to make the actual glowing luminaire the showpiece, appearing as a luminous volume hovering in space. — CJ  
[marset.com](http://marset.com)

# 42.

**FINEST TABLE**  
Largo by Barber Osgerby  
for Marsotto Edizioni  
UK

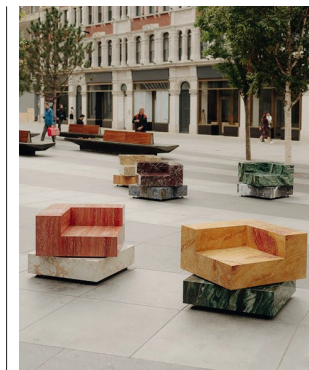
Working with Italian Marsotto, London-based studio Barber Osgerby has designed a new series of marble tables named Largo. Shaped by skilful craftsmen at the Marsotto factory near Verona, the design merges geometric elements, with its triangular bases interlocked with rounded tops. A crossroad of modern lines and classical marble colours, including the archetypal white carrara, the table sits naturally indoors or outdoors, with its sturdy and elegant form perfect for a laid-back lunch under a tree or for dancing around (or on) come night. — AAL  
[barberosgerby.com](http://barberosgerby.com)



# 45.

**BEST FOR LONGEVITY**  
55 Rigaud by  
Bonhôte Zapata  
Switzerland

In Chêne-Bougeries, prompted by a design contest run by the council, Swiss practice Bonhôte Zapata has built 49 timber-clad apartments with generous balconies and a nursery, surrounded by welcoming shared spaces. The project had lofty expectations when construction was finished in 2017: the brief, after all, was to provide a housing complex with a strong sense of community, and it’s all too easy for these projects to fail to live up to such a brief. But when MONOCLE visits five years on, the three buildings on site are buzzing with activity. The communal spaces, far from being desolate or litter-filled, are packed with plants tended by residents, with well-used chairs and tables sitting in open-air courtyard areas. The key to success? Namely, close collaboration with the residents in the building and design process to ensure buy-in. — NM  
[bonhotezapata.ch](http://bonhotezapata.ch)



# 46.

**DESIGNER OF THE YEAR**  
Sabine Marcelis  
The Netherlands

Sabine Marcelis practices across scales and mediums. Over the past 12 months, she has worked on civic installations in London, launched a collection with Ikea, designed furniture for Hem and curated a show at the Vitra Design Museum. — NM

**How do you approach work?**  
I like design to serve a purpose and am a firm believer that it should be timeless. I’m allergic to trends and things that look specific to a time because inevitably it will age badly and people will want to get rid of it.

**What should designers be looking for in 2023?**  
We’re at a unique moment now with the climate crisis; there’s an urgency to change what materials we’re working with. There’s a lot of research and companies releasing interesting materials that generations of designers didn’t have access to. It’s an exciting moment to embrace that.  
[sabinemarcelis.com](http://sabinemarcelis.com)

# 44.

**BEST BUSINESS CAMPUS**  
Norrskén Kigali  
House by Mass  
Rwanda

The percentage of foreign investment that reaches early stage businesses in Rwanda remains low – a situation that prompted Swedish nonprofit Norrskén to commission Mass to create this entrepreneurial workspace for local businesses. Norrskén Kigali House is situated on the École Belge site, one of the oldest international schools in Rwanda. In addition to renovated former classroom blocks and a new office space, the hub includes a restaurant and outdoor pergola to host parties and presentations. It’s the first adaptive reuse development of its kind in Rwanda’s capital. — PMO  
[massdesigngroup.org](http://massdesigngroup.org)



PHOTOGRAPHERS: Mariano Herrera, Alicia Ferrari, Yannis Klouche, Johannes Marburg



# 47.

**BEST WAY TO WAKE UP**  
**ACo2 by Punkt**  
*Switzerland*

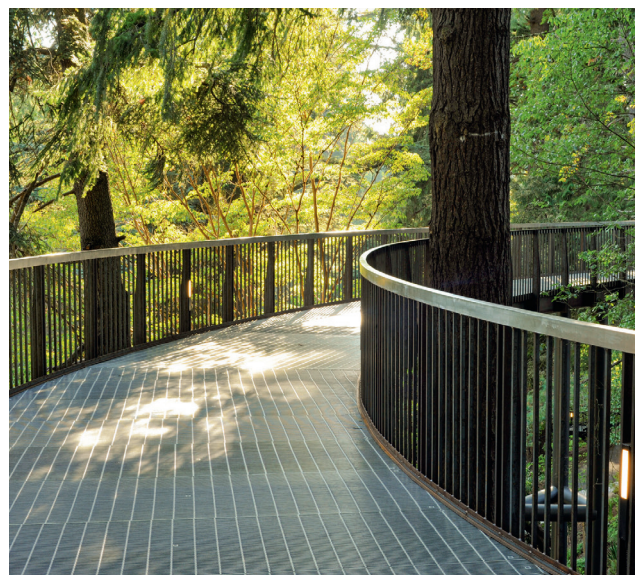
When Petter Neby, founder of electronics company Punkt, wanted a stylish alarm clock, he turned to industrial designer Jasper Morrison. In 2011 they created the Punkt ACo2: a clock crafted from anodised natural aluminium. It found its way into museums. They can anticipate a similar fate for their newest creation, the ACo2, which features subtle refinements to the aluminium body and a new black anodised finish. — NM [punkt.ch](http://punkt.ch)



# 49.

**MOST VERDANT VISTAS**  
**Leach Botanical Gardens**  
 by Land Morphology  
*USA*

Thanks to the designs of landscape architects Land Morphology, visitors to Leach Botanical Gardens in Portland, Oregon, are now readily immersed in the area's lush forest ecosystem through a new tree walk that weaves its way through douglas firs and western cedars. Appearing to be floating thanks to thin structural supports, the walk's bar-grate decking allows onlookers striking views of the forest floor from above. The project is a reminder that a light touch is sometimes all that's necessary and that the landscape, and views of it, can do the heavy lifting. — SRO



PHOTOGRAPHER: Max Michozowski

# 48.

**FINEST FOR FURRY FRIENDS**  
**Berberé**  
 by Opinion Ciatti  
*Italy*

There's no reason a perfectly well-appointed living room should be dragged down by tacky pet accessories. This is why Raffaella Mangiarotti's design for Italy's Opinion Ciatti caught our eye. Called Berberé, the stylish and portable pet bed features an ash frame and leather bed, with an optional washable fabric mattress. Thanks to a manual interlocking system that doesn't

require any glue or screws, Berberé also combines convenience and comfort, with assembly, disassembly and transport effectively foolproof as a result. It's a stylish solution for a pooch that will enhance the quality of a home – all without a pawprint logo in sight. — GCH [opinionciatti.com](http://opinionciatti.com)



Design Awards  
 2023

# 50.

**BEST TRAINING PROGRAMME**  
**Goldfinger**  
*UK*

UK-based furniture firm Goldfinger is going against the grain and carving a new niche by making high-end timber pieces and nurturing talent in the surrounding community too. Nestled beneath the iconic Trellick Tower in London, the firm has risen to prominence by building bespoke tables and chairs for world-renowned architects and high-end department stores such as Selfridges. But it's the work it does beyond the shop floor that is worth celebrating: it partners with local schools and supports marginalised youths through a variety of workshops and traineeships. This offering includes Manufacto, a programme backed by Hermès, where 10- to 13-year-olds are guided through the making of their own wooden object, and Future Makers, a course which provides free career guidance sessions, work placement and traineeship opportunities for young people entering the workforce. Since 2013 it has helped 20 of these "graduates" successfully start their own creative businesses – here's hoping for more. — JSI [goldfinger.design](http://goldfinger.design)



**The trophy**  
*Global*

It's only appropriate that Monocle Design Awards winners, whose projects and products are perfectly crafted, receive a trophy of equal quality. Enter South Tyrolean designer Harry Thaler, who has updated his original design. The body of the new trophy is made from ash, which neatly complements the brass elements. As with any smart work of design, the gong also has the capacity to improve its owners' lives: the award doubles as a paperweight, so it can have a life beyond the trophy cabinet. — NM [harrythaler.it](http://harrythaler.it)

