



It was a show presenting colourful, exciting designs and the richness of different cultures. And for the first time, it was added with more "satellites" than ever, for example the Designers Block at St. Pancras Chamber, Kings Cross.



Yes, we're talking about this year's contemporary interior product fair "100% Design" that took place in London from October 5 to 8. Comprising the latest work from the industry's biggest names alongside innovative products from upcoming designers, the fair has been put on par with Italy's Milan Fair and New York's ICFF.

The highlights included seminars featuring top designers such as Thomas Heatherwick, Ron Arad, Rasshied Din of Din Associates and Charles Jackguard, who talked about the design development of Mark & Spencer's retail-store concept. The launch of a new furniture range from Jasper Morrison, Michael Sodeau and Matthew Hilton showed the creative idea behind low-cost

production.

Ou Baholyodhin's studio line meanwhile offered materialisation and design sophistication. Students from design schools such as Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, the Royal College of Art and the Manchester Metropolitan University also joined the prestigious fringe event.



Moreover, Asian designers, especially the Japanese, brought in simple designs reflecting interesting, beautiful cultures. The new exhibition of Thailand's Propaganda and designs from New Zealand firms lent the event even more colour and excitement.

Looking at the focus of this year's trend, it appears to be the year of consumer orientation. As the market is highly competitive in the Post-Industrial Era, consumers are more demanding than ever. Design serves to bridge their satisfaction. For example, Ron Arad's Memo Chair (1999) can be adjusted to fit the user's every move.

With the changing attitude of educated consumers, exhibitors have to plan their strategies that appeal to their target group. Most of them focus on brand image rather than selling their products, and consumers are persuaded to view the products in another perspective.



These experiences could be seen in many of the booths. El Ultimo Grito went a step further, allowing everyone to draw or design his or her own product on the wall and the floor of the stand. Everyone who participated in this drawing is certainly not going to forget El Ultimo Grito.

New furniture company Keen impressed the audience with its simple media-round paper boxes with holes. Through the holes, the audience were able to view animation of people using furniture. This animation was produced using the force from a spinning bicycle on the centre of the stand. Keen, founded by a former executive of Vitra, Charles Keen, sells office furniture by commissioning many well-known designers such as Thomas Heatherwick, Ron Carter, Sir Robin Day and Jane Dillon.

This was just a brief report on 100% Design 2000 and the direction the British design scene is taking this year.

The next show will involve consumerst behaviour in a post-materialism society and designs which would probably reflect the way we live in the future. []

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