

Gerard der Kinderen, The Netherlands
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Participation Designersblock Milan 2007



New Dutch designer Gerard der Kinderen.

After twenty years Gerard der Kinderen decided to start designing furniture again. Gerard visited the, now called, Design Academy, for three years in the beginning of the eighties. Started, and closed after two years, the first ‘Dutch Design Shop’ in The Netherlands and started his design and communication agency. Recently sold his agency, kept working there but also started designing furniture in December last year.

“I worked as a creative and as a strategy director and to be honest, I began to like it less and less. As I have always done some designing for private use, I felt more and more that I had to return to what I liked most: design products! I took up a month holiday, last December, and the designs came floating. Mid January I had a collection of ca. 20 design concepts, that was more than enough to handle, so I made a decision; I quit my job and started my design career on 1 February 2007.”

Not an easy decision but there were so many positive reactions on his designs that his confidence grew to make this radical career move. “Once I made my decision it felt like I came home, after 20 years!” Gerard says.

The designs

“Last year I came across two special materials; zinc and lacquered foam. The ‘new’ zinc is a highly underestimated sustainable, environmentally friendly, material perfect for outdoor and indoor domestic use. I’ve made some designs using zinc in tables and chairs. The other

material 'lacquered foam' has much potential to enhance comfort and quality for outdoor and indoor furniture. It enables you to create comfort furniture that surprises the user".

Gerard was able to get the full support of some professionals in the production business to develop his designs, in a very short period, to production ready designs. Where lacquered foam is applied his designs are developed together with Leolac, the leading manufacturer and patent holder of high quality lacquered foam products. "I was lucky to meet with Leolac. Together we develop my designs to consumer ready products. It all starts with a design concept, but the hard work starts after that! For me a design is only then finished when the first production series is made and it's available for the user." "I take full responsibility, that's why I have created my own design label called Individuals™." As long as there's no other manufacturer who will market a specific design of Gerard, it stays in the collection of Individuals™. At this moment some designs already have the attention of some large market players.

Milan 2007

Word travels fast, Gerard was asked to participate in Designersblock Milan 2007.

"I decided to participate with my 'tableclothing' table and my 'comfort square' chairs. Some people have seen and felt some prototypes and every time the same thing happens: A big smile and an astonishing reaction follows, every time! "Jee.. What the.. is this!" and things like that. These designs have a, let's say, rather normal appearance but once you touch them, feel them, use them it's completely different. The use of foam gives a surprising quality to these designs. People smile! I consider that as a compliment to my design."

The quality of the construction and finish enable heavy use, indoor as well as outdoor.

"There must be a lot of restaurants, bars and hotels all over the world who would like to see happy faces on their customers". "I'm not the only one who is enthusiastic." Gerard apologises. "But I really love it".

Resume

Gerard der Kinderen decided to stop his professional career as a creative and strategy director in the communication business after 20 years, to become a professional designer. He started in December last year and now has a collection of some 20 designs. Some major market players have already shown interest in his designs. In Milan at Designersblock he will show his surprising 'soft' table and chair, called 'Tableclothing Table' and 'Soft Square Chair'.

"Products that make people smile, I love that" according to Gerard der Kinderen.

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