

HEAD – Genève

Conversation Pieces

Ventura Lambrate, Via Sbodio 30-6

Opening

Wednesday April 9, 2014, from 6 pm to 8 pm

Tuesday April 8 – Saturday April 12, 10 am – 8 pm

Sunday April 13, 10 am – 6 pm



Conversation Pieces

Conversation Pieces, an apartment specifically designed by the students for the occasion. The title *Conversation pieces* refers to the table centrepieces used as decoration for ceremonial tables, since the Renaissance. Their purpose is to suggest subjects of conversation to the guests. Beyond simply function, could design act as vehicle for debate?

In an apartment designed entirely by the students, from spaces to furniture, from video games to interactive wallpaper and culminating in three ceramic centrepieces, which give the exhibition its name, the design of the space, products and objects shows how, over and above functions, materials, forms and concepts, its role can also modify interpersonal relationships and, for example, draw people into conversation.

So, as its name indicates, *Conversation Pieces* is an exhibition which, as well as presenting and displaying the students' work contextualized in a realistic contemporary show apartment, also invites leading figures from the world of design, students and a guest whose name is selected at random every day for a themed evening dinner organised by Alexandra Midal and Jean-Pierre Greff. Gathered around a vast round table in the dining room, they will embrace a significant design issue, analyse, examine and discuss it during the dinner. The latter will be filmed, recorded and then broadcasted the next day on the website of our media partner, TAR art review.

Conversation Pieces invites visitors to experiment with the invention and production of forms in a fun and convivial manner. The exhibition proposes an alternative way of thinking about design, not as an end in itself, but as the means to create an environment conducive to exchange. Concentrating on design's capacity to promote debate, whether in the literal sense of the dinners, or the metaphorical one of the projects and spaces exhibited, raises the question of in what way it is possible for forms to also be the expression of a soul or a *Stimmung*.

We are perhaps more accustomed to attending a lecture or a colloquium, like the famous *International Design Conference* in Aspen or *Design Indaba*, to listen to designers, manufacturers or historians talking about design, but *Conversation Pieces* reverses the process, places it in the context of the private space of the apartment and proposes reconsidering the latter as a space to create and foster exchange and debate. With its bedroom, library, dining room, corridors, WC, bathroom, etc., *Conversation Pieces* is a brain-house that accommodates a vibrant and rapidly changing notion of design.

Based on an idea by Alexandra Midal and produced by students of HEAD – Genève in a workshop co-directed by Nitzan Cohen and Daniel Zamarbide (for the spaces and furniture), and in a series of workshops lead by matali crasset and Magdalena Gerber (centrepieces), by Camille Scherrer (interactive wallpaper) and by Åbäke and Jean-Claude Chianale (signage and visual communication), as well as featuring a competition to design the embroidery for the napkins on an idea by Yves Mirande, *Conversation Pieces* is an exhibition which brings together the Design students of HEAD - Genève: from the Spaces and Communication Master, the Media Design Master, the Fashion and Accessory Design Master, the Interior Architecture Bachelor, the Fashion and Jewelry Bachelor as well as from the CERCCO, Centre for Experimentation and Realisation in Contemporary Ceramics of HEAD – Genève. Have a look at the preview...

The students: Marie Adam, Jonathan Ageneau, Seila Alvarez, Benjamin Ben Kemoun, Jennifer Berger, Lucas Bertinotti, Emma Bertrand, Jessica Brancato, Clément Brazille, Ines-Charlotte Brodard, Marie Eve Brunner, Anissa Charef, Praiya Chinagarn, Liza Clivaz, Marthe Cresson, Felipe Delgado-Lopez, Timothé Deschamps, Erika Douadi, Basile Ehinger, Amélie Freyche, Hélène Gagliardi, Yulia Garcia-Skrebneva, Eva Gaume, Paolo Gnazzo, Sophie Grandjean, Antoine Guay, Barbara Jenny, Anastasia Karpova, Yuan Li, Alexandra Loader, Dorothée Loustalot, Johann Metral, Lucille Mosimann, Lucien Muchutti, Céline Mosset, Annja Müller, Berta Isquierdo Pastor, Agathe Pautrot, Roland Pillonel, Sandra Plisson, Amélie Ramseyer, Gaspar Reverdin, Aurélien Reymond, Anne-Sophie Richard, Sophie Ros, Helen Rosset, William Roussel, Andrea Rovescalli, Aline Sansonnens, Marine Sergeant, Fabio Stefanoni, Monika Steiger, Nadezda Suvorova, Sandrine Theriault, Adriana Toro, Emeline Vitte, Morgane Zueger, Saskia Zürcher

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With the guests, each Master of Ceremonies will help to spark debate and demonstrate how design, even, and perhaps above all, in a time of crisis, is a key place for individual inventiveness and debate and that it is by nature participatory.

Tuesday, April 8th

Nicolas Nova is the Master of Ceremonies for the first dinner
Promethean Unbound: Technological Design after the Death of the Future

Because they involve technology, interaction and media design are often seen as being “separate” within the field of contemporary design. By taking digital technology as their creative material, designers nevertheless raise the question of a new relation to technique at a time when the notion of Progress appears outdated. This session of *Conversation Pieces* in Milan tackles this singular incursion of design outside its usual limits: what relation can be adopted with technology apart from that of blissful ignorance or a purely critical stance? How do these issues translate into design projects and teaching?

Wednesday, April 9th

Martino Gamper and Åbäke are the Masters of Ceremonies for the second dinner
And Then There Were None

One by one we awake from the cryogenic sleep into which the Corporation has plunged us in order to cross the light years that separate us from this planet, where we each have a mission. This dinner is the opportunity to lay bare or to mystify the relationships between the various parties. One of us is an android who is not the person he or she pretends to be.

Thursday, April 10th

Yves Mirande is the ringmaster of the third dinner
Is there a possibility for design criticism?

It seems that in magazines (of architecture, decoration, design and among others), criticism is now lacking. This goes far beyond the world of magazines and criticism is struggling to carve out a new place for itself. Given that criticism is by nature constructive, what about this freedom of expression and thought? This dinner will therefore tackle, alternating light—hearted and in—depth approaches, the notion of criticism in the field of design and could even spill over into other fields. We will joyfully converse on this theme during the course of an evening dinner (which may of course be ... criticised).

Friday, April 11th

Ruedi Baur is the Master of Ceremonies for the fourth dinner

Fascinated by the Italian term *immagini coordinate* which has much richer possibilities than its equivalents in other languages: corporate identity, identité visuelle, *Erscheinungsbild* and above all *Brand* (initially used with reference to the branding of livestock and of slaves), Ruedi Baur is organising his dinner on the theme of *immagini coordinate*.

Media Contact

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