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APRIL - MAY 2010, RS 100

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**WHATS NEW
DOWN MEMORY LANE
WITH RAJ REWAL
THE WELLNESS AND
OUTDOOR BUZZ**



IN CONVERSATION WITH... THE BOUROULLEC BROTHERS

The rising stars of European design, Ronan and Erwan reinvent convention to create thoughtful pieces for our peripatetic generation

TEXT BY VIDULA KOTIAN

It's like watching one of those narrator-within-a-narrator movies – with a strong directorial voice depicting the incidents but still flexible enough to let the characters tell their story alongside. But that's what most of the designs out of the Bouroullec factory are like: A board on which you add your own strip. The easy, adaptable products are almost like an afterthought. In the sense that their user-friendliness is so entrenched and functions so variable that they end up having a completely different avatar based on who's utilising it. Like the Pebbles collection of outdoor furniture in 2008 whose pieces work like an installation with multiple configurations. The four main seats are slightly concave discs that you can use individually to sit, lie or collectively converge.

What is most striking about the Designers of the Year of the international EDIDA 2009-10 is how elementary a tale they seem to spin. "It may sound contradictory yet we always tend to make an idea basic by questioning it over and over again so that we obtain clean lines that make an object. To end up with a project that looks simple and light, you sometimes need to work hard and spend years on it," explain Ronan and Erwan. In fact they claim that it's when things get most contentious between them that they manage to push each other's boundaries and produce the best work. The road blocks to the creation process may be a common thing but the duo has a different take on it: "What we feel makes a designer successful is his or her ability to keep in line with the projects from A to Z, knowing that the process is highly complex and full of obstacles. To be capable of integrating this complexity, while keeping the essence of

the initial project, is the number one difficulty for us. It is easy to have an idea yet it's challenging to make it real: This is, in a few words, the complexity of leading a design project well."

Their vast repertoire of work includes domestic and office furniture, jewellery and diverse home accessories and even architectural projects. Early this year saw the opening of the Dos Pallilos at the Casa Camper hotel in Berlin. The idea is straightforward: A long wooden table to seat 30 guests and watch the "show" in the stainless steel kitchen where the chefs perform. But the subtext as usual is complex: The glass front allows passers-by to participate in the show as well; different ground levels ensure the space feels more like a performance area; and the space is voluntarily sparse to let the "scenery express itself".

So what's next? "As for the news, we will launch a couple of new projects during the Milan Fair in April, including a contemporary lamp with Established & Sons who invited us to work with Murano's master glass blowers of Venini in Italy. We also have designed the Lampalumina lamp manufactured by Bitossi and will unveil two tables for Magis (one dining table and one round bistro-like occasional table). In the spring as well, we are invited by Gallery Kreo in Paris to do an exhibit. Finally, in June we look forward to the launch of a new collection of elements for the bathroom for Hansgrohe/Axor that took several years to be developed."

Whether growing a chair (Vegetal), working on a cross-cultural collaboration (Wajima) or stringing together a new language for space (Algues), the Breton-born brothers are definitely the cult classics of French design.

Ronan and Erwan Bouroullec, Paris
Website: www.bouroullec.com

"TO END UP WITH A PROJECT THAT LOOKS SIMPLE AND LIGHT, YOU SOMETIMES NEED TO WORK HARD AND SPEND YEARS ON IT"

Design should be...

Ronan and Erwan: Useful.

The first memorable decor product you came across

R and E: The famous chair Thonet 214 because it embodies a kind of design perfection. The subtle harmony of its shape with the breakthrough wood-curling technique made it a timeless, classic chair. Every detail that must have required a highly rigorous work seems nonetheless obvious and light. It is a technical seat that integrates many constraints, the main one being to obey to seating standards.

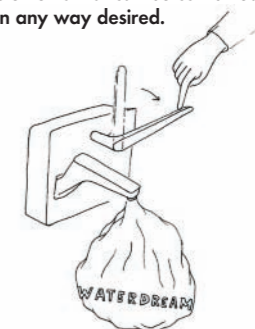
What do you take on picnic?

R: I think I would take nothing. I don't need a blanket because I like to sit on the ground; I don't need a hat because I would always find shade.

E: Maybe a sketch book. ♦

HOT THIS SUMMER

To be launched in Paris mid-June, the Axor Bouroullec range will have 75 individual elements that can be combined in any way desired.



DECOR PEOPLE
SALUTING DESIGN GREATS



WAJIMA

Following Japan Brand's invitation, the duo created a modern collection using the area's traditional expertise: Lacquer.



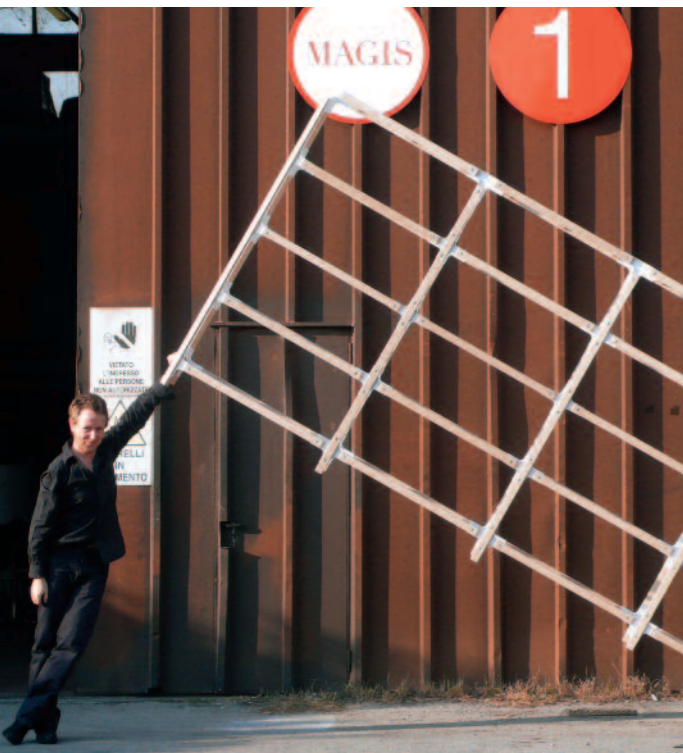
DOS PALLILOS

The new eatery at Casa Camper Hotel, Berlin, offers a one of a kind culinary experience (reflected in the interiors) with elBulli's former chef Albert Raurich.

AND MORE...

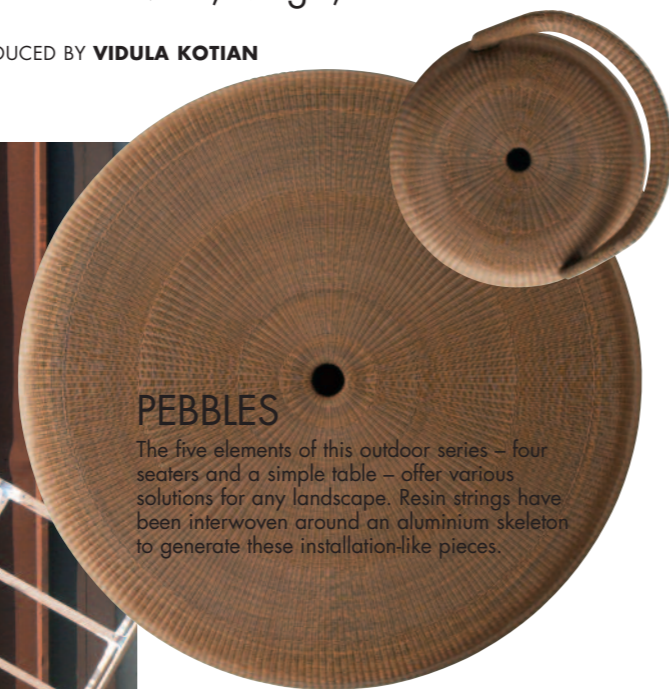
Nothing is as simple as it seems – especially to make. Here's why the boys are favourites of top European brands like Vitra, Magis, etc

PRODUCED BY **VIDULA KOTIAN**



STEELWOOD

Presented at Salone 2008 for Magis, the handsome series has chairs, shelving and table systems. The beech and steel family are popular office furniture for creative firms.



PEBBLES

The five elements of this outdoor series – four seaters and a simple table – offer various solutions for any landscape. Resin strings have been interwoven around an aluminium skeleton to generate these installation-like pieces.



QUILT

Designed for Established & Sons, this armchair is made of a metal structure with fibreglass shell and textile.