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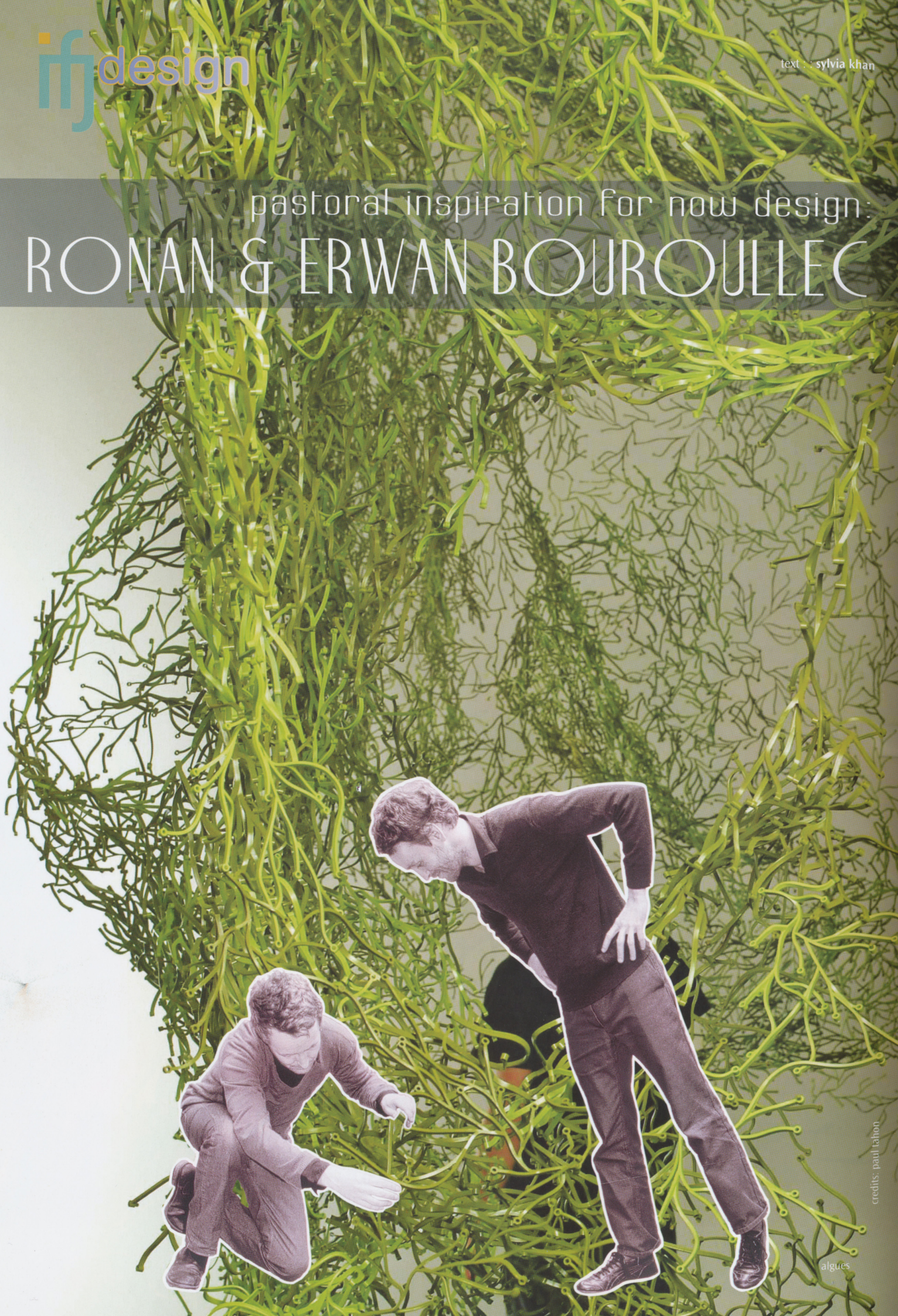


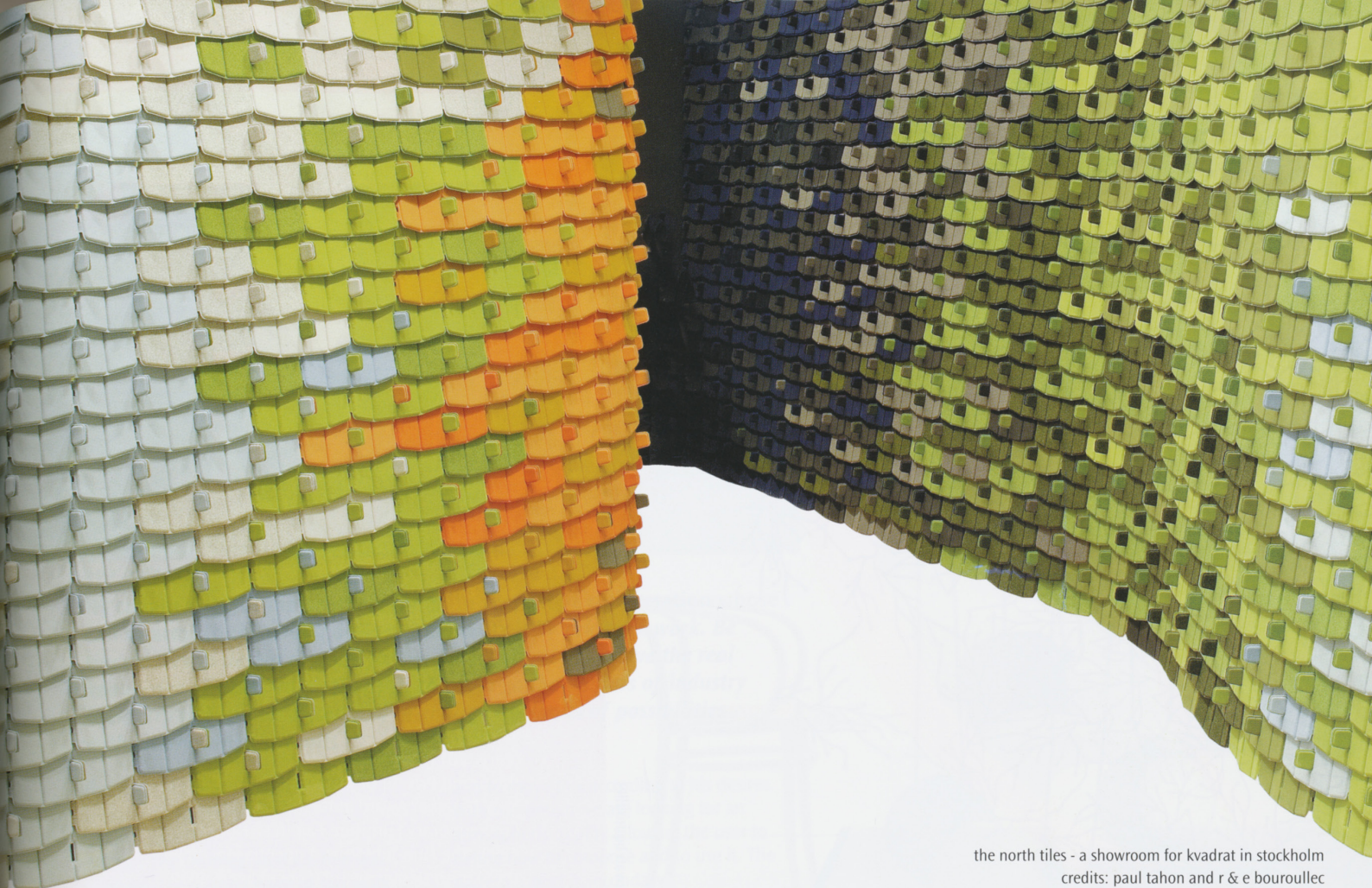
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the PEOPLE : AR. ABRAHAM JOHN | RONAN & ERWAN BOUROULLEC | COLLABORATIVE ARCHITECTURE

pastoral inspiration for now design:
RONAN & ERWAN BOUROULLEC





the north tiles - a showroom for kvadrat in stockholm
credits: paul tahon and r & e bouroullec

in a village near brittany, france, two doctor's sons were inspired to follow a path quite divergent from that of their parents; they chose to be designers. the two boys grew to attain a reputation for design and have since been seen in this elevated space, creating objects of desire for the design aficionado to enjoy

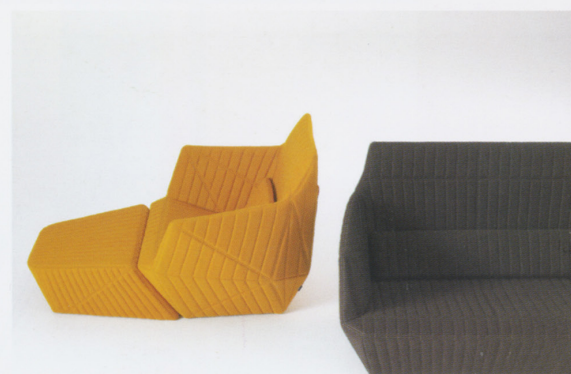
The Bouroullec brothers,

Ronan (1971) and Erwan (1976) have created a collaboration which they describe as dialogue of their personalities and shared notion of 'the intention to reach more balance and fineness'. Ronan says while schoolwork did not interest him, art and creative activities piqued his curiosity and led him to design, saying, "I appreciate this field very much because it deals with many different aspects at the same time." Erwan followed in the illustrious footsteps of a brother just 5 years older via another creative path, saying "I understood, via music, that I would rather aim for a creative career. After studying art, it was quite evident for me to work with my brother Ronan, since he was already a designer."

Of their early inspiration, the brothers say, "We grew up in Brittany, surrounded by nature, land and the ocean. We appreciated our childhood in the simplicity of what it offered and at the same time its richness. Inspiration is never direct but something more complex and observation can be considered our main external influence. We try to observe accurately people's behavior in everyday life and to understand usual practices

and needs. In fact we have a deep passion for the small details of life, the way people consider objects, the way they use them etc."

1997 was a seminal year, being when the Disintegrated Kitchen made its appearance at the Salon du Meuble in Paris and the brothers were spotted by Giulio Cappellini, who gave them their first industrial design projects, notably the Lit clos ("Closed Bed") and the Spring Chair. In 2000, Issey Miyake asked them to design a space for his new collection of A-Poc clothes in Paris. A 2002 meeting with Vitra's Rolf Fehlbaum resulted the Joyn office system and was the beginning of a special partnership which has resulted in unique offerings including Algues, the Alcove Sofa and the Worknest (winner of the "Best of the Best" Red Dot Design Award, 2008). The Bouroullecs have also worked with key design-led manufacturers, Vitra, Kvadrat, Magis, Kartell, Established and Sons, Ligne Roset, Axor, Alessi, Issey Miyake, Cappellini, Mattiazzi, Flos, Mutina and Hay.



facett
credits: paul tahon and r & e bouroullec



algues
axor bouroullec

credits: roman et erwan bouroullec



alcove sofa

They keep it fresh with experimental activity and occasional architectural projects such as the Floating House in 2006 and other stores and restaurants. Numerous awards, they have been voted Designers of the Year at the Salon du Meuble, 2002 and Maison & Objet (Paris, 2011). Their other awards include the Grand Prix du Design (Paris, 1998), the New Designer Award at the International Contemporary Furniture Fair (ICFF New York, 1999), the Finn-Juhl Prize (Copenhagen, 2008), the Danish Design Award (Copenhagen, 2010), and the A&W Designer of the Year award in 2013. Additionally, the Facett collection (Ligne Roset) and the Worknest office chair both won the "Best of the Best" Red Dot Design Award, respectively in 2005 and 2008. In 2009, the Vegetal chair won the ICFF award for outdoor furniture and the Steelwood Chair won the Compasso d'Oro in 2011.

They have been widely showcased at the Design Museum, London (2002), at the Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam, and La Piscine, Roubaix (all in 2004), at the Villa Noailles, Hyeres (2008), at the Grand Hornu, Belgium (2009) and at the architecture center Arc en Réve, Bordeaux and the Victoria and Albert Museum (2011) and are part of the permanent collections of numerous museums.



credits: tahon & bouroullec



spring chair



credits: morgane le gall

a-poc boutique

IFJ caught up with the brothers for an introspective conversation whose call to arms to the young design community is “Work work work. Be sincere. Try to design projects for the industry, but first have the real knowledge of industry, so that you can over go the borders of industry itself. Try to focus on a goal and to enlarge the limits of possibilities without knowing the limits !”

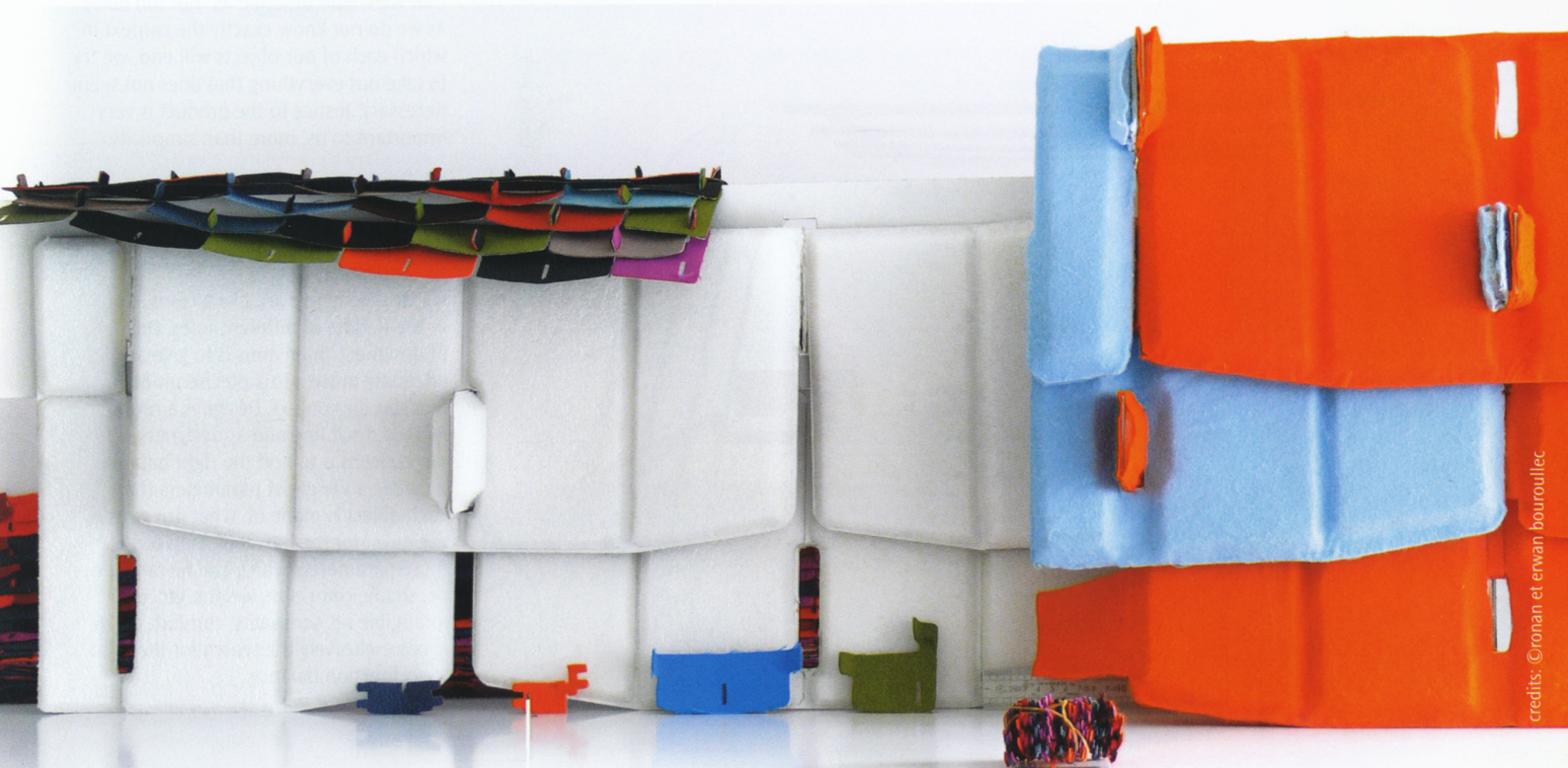
ifj : *What did you wish to convey through your iconic pieces, the Disintegrated kitchen, and Algue ?*

R&EB : The Disintegrated Kitchen was perhaps, the starting point of our work, presenting an idea of flexibility. We wanted to work on an unfamiliar scale, close to architecture but employing the logic of furniture, being an element that is autonomous in relation to the general infrastructure of the house. In the case of architecture, integration, adaptation and modularity are very important. With Algues, we continued this research, working on small modules as scalable walls, adaptable to volume and surfaces. The user is able to build his wall himself

and to move this according to his desires. With our design we are looking for an atmospheric quality allowing the user to define how to compose and to use it. The pattern aspect is secondary.

All the creations are to be considered the same way, even if some seem formally more distinct than others in the way they grow organically. For example, with the Algues or the Steelwood chair, we tried to achieve a kind of inventiveness, technical improvement, and typological novelty. In the end, one may seem elegant or minimal and the other more nature-inspired. But both come from the same process and the same quest for questioning the object.

the north tiles - a showroom for kvadrat in stockholm



credits: ©ronan et erwan bouroullec



aim lamp

credits: flos



credits: paul tahon and r & e bouroullec

joyn hut



credits: roman et erwan bouroullec

striped chair

joyn office system



credits: vitra

ifj: *The Lit Clos seems to take something from the traditional Brittany bed, did you think this at the time? What other traditions have you continued in your design?*

R&EB: We have always been captivated by using ancient techniques and reinterpreting them in the contemporary. For example, the Lit Clos and more recently the rug Losanges (Nanimarquina) is about reinterpreting the traditional Persian rug using the ancient kilim technique.

ifj: *Do you design differently or follow a different way of designing today than you did, say, 10 years ago?*

R&EB: Since we started to design, we strive towards a sort of synthesis and try to find the essence and the logic of the project within its own hypothesis. In a way they all have brought a DNA that we have since used every time in our work, because they were full of a certain freedom. There is a continuity in our projects that links them all together.

We make a great point of designing pieces that can be integrated in people's interiors, whatever the cultural background may be. It results in projects that we would describe as "not too noisy". As we do not know exactly the context in which each of our objects will end, we try to take out everything that does not seem necessary. Justice to the product is very important to us, more than simplicity.

ifj: *What are your thoughts on design today? Do you see that it has a path? Do designers have a responsibility in terms of their offerings?*

R&EB: Designers are like a conductor in the middle of different roles. One of designer's main aims is to give an adequate answer to a precise problem in a specific context. Design is a multi-faceted discipline and as designers, our concern is to find the right balance between a variety of parameters that each object is made of. What drives us is the quest for the harmony between all these parameters which can be tangible i.e. shape, color, size, weight, etc. or intangible i.e. sensuality, comfort, etc. It is not exclusively the search for the right form-function balance.



credits: studio bouroullec

pila chair



credits: studio bouroullec

pilo table



credits: studio bouroullec

losanges

ifj : *What are your thoughts on ecological issues and of adding to the quantum of products on the markets ?*

R&EB : We are concerned by materials and fabrication processes and their impact on the environment. However, the real impact of objects on the environment is complicated to evaluate. An object that seems to pollute a lot because it is non-recyclable can be manufactured very simply without any ecological impact. On the contrary, a very eco-friendly material may require a complicated and polluting manufacturing process. Our partners help us understand the real environmental impact of our projects and to rationalize this impact. Some, like Kvadrat, are very preoccupied by these questions and invite us to share their environmental charter. Of course, designers have a responsibility to the environment and a role to play in limiting environmental degradation. However, they cannot act alone, they need the help of their manufacturer partners for that.

ifj : *Where would you like to see 'Design' headed in the future ? If you could plot a path.. where would you draw it ?*

R&EB : The mission of design in the future maybe is to accompany and anticipate the evolution of our shared ecosystem in the most correct way. In our case, we are interested in helping people reorganize their working space and their living space. In our work, we have been developing solutions to the questions, 'How do you deal with architecture' and 'How do you create a separation, or a kind of wall' and 'How do you customize an interior space to suit your needs ?'

ifj : *What are the main learnings on the path from Quimper to where you are today, as designers and as human beings ?*

R&EB : We have met a lot of people and we shared amazing moments with all of them, from friends, manufacturers, craftsmen, designers, assistants... We really appreciate working in a family environment and with passionate people ! ifj



credits: studio bouroullec

ovale collection