



DITTE HAMMERSTRØM

FOR THE LOVE OF DETAIL



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PREFACE

by Maria Wettergren

God Is In The Details...

...Ludwig Mies Van der Rohe once stated, and looking at his sublime *Barcelona Chair* one must admit that the German architect didn't leave much to chance. The funny thing about detail is that it, to a certain extent, stops being detail when you start focusing on it. This is precisely what Ditte Hammerstrøm has been doing since her graduation from the Danish Design School 15 years ago. And in Ditte Hammerstrøm's universe, God is a probably a *She*... With the words of Mette Strømgaard Dalby, the former director of the Trapholt Museum: *The feminine decorations and colors are repeated in much of Ditte Hammerstrøm's furniture and they help mark the fact that a generation of younger female designers has taken the lead with a vengeance. Without tending towards too many clichés, the women's entry on the Danish design scene has created a new departure with regard to decoration.*

Can a detail be the main thing? Can decoration constitute the core? Ditte Hammerstrøm answers in the affirmative, which may seem paradoxical, yet it is nevertheless one of the main

pillars of her design. The exhibition *For the Love of Detail* focuses on the role of detail in the creative process, which I believe is key to understanding Ditte Hammerstrøm's originality. Her works are all revealing of the fundamental importance of detail, not as an addition to an already existing structure, not as an *ornament*, but as a trigger of new shapes, of functions and emotions: Detail in the sense of *singularity*, not accessory.

Soft curves & hard edges

Recognized as an important pioneer of the new Nordic design scene, Ditte Hammerstrøm has been awarded several prizes, such as the "Walk The Plank Award" in 2008 and the "Finn Juhl Architecture Prize" in 2011, and she is without a doubt one of the most interesting Scandinavian designers today.

Ditte Hammerstrøm's excellence has many facets, but one of her most original contributions is her careful attention to upholstery. Here, upholstery should be understood in its widest possible sense, as the *surface* of the furniture.

Of course, to work with upholstery from an artistic perspective is not a new phenomenon. Yet even when it comes to important design pieces, upholstery often serves a functional and/or decorative role as something meant to be comfortable, resistant and/or beautiful. In most cases, upholstery is treated as an accessory to the piece of furniture, accompanying it rather than defining it. In Ditte Hammerstrøm's furniture it is the other way around. Here the aesthetics of the surface is central and determining.

Taking a closer look at Ditte Hammerstrøm's creative vocabulary, the cord or string seems to be a key component and forms a connecting thread, as it were. Already in her early works, such as the "Bistro Light" (2005), "Wrinkle" (2005) or the "Loungescape" (2005), the string appears: like a landscape the daybeds merge into each other in delicate green and yellow nuances, tied together. In a raw, yet sophisticated way, Ditte Hammerstrøm uses the string as an important technical devise in fixing the upholstery to the furniture. The gesture is free and bold and at the same time controlled.

But the string also plays a more suggestive role as a trigger of playful associations. With its lacings, the "Bistro Light" strongly recalls a corset; only this time, it is the upholstery and not the female body being tamed. The foam is left uncovered, without fabric, and the string is functional, decorative and suggestive - all at once. Instead of hiding the junctions, Ditte Hammerstrøm leaves them visible and enhances the beauty of attachment, literally as well as figuratively speaking.

The thin string becomes a thick rope in the work "Bunch of Boxes" (2008), a hanging cabinet. With an extraordinarily sculptural gesture, Ditte Hammerstrøm has eliminated all the traditional components of a piece of storage furniture - the back, front, top and legs - retaining only the essential: 10 storage boxes in various sizes suspended from the ceiling in black plait-

ed ropes. The MDF boxes are coated with a thick luxurious lacquer, elevating this traditionally cheap material to a high level of nobility. The extreme attention to detail and the quest for exquisite craftsmanship, so perfect that it transcends even the poorest material, is remarkable.

The combination of luxurious craftsmanship and "cheap" materials finds another interesting expression in the works "Wall Stools" (2006) and "Small Tall Stools" (2007), where the plastic string, mainly known from the garden furniture of the 1970s, is inserted in the exquisite hand-crafted wood, like a punk version of intarsia. Here, the perfection is even greater underneath than on the top of the stools, something that recalls the Japanese crafts tradition.

The furniture's tactile quality, with invisible details appealing as much to the fingers as to the eyes, is also a true heritage from the Danish golden age of handcrafted furniture design, but with a radical new twist.

In her latest work "Side By Side" (2014), three daybeds of different heights can be combined in various ways, working either together or separately. Each part focuses on rhythm and patterns made by repetition, and here, Ditte Hammerstrøm is once again experimenting with new types of sculptural upholstering. In "Side By Side / Low Mohair" the seat is made up of no less than 203 foam balls, each lavishly covered with exquisite mohair fabric. The exuberance of Low Mohair is counterbalanced by the Table-Bench with its quiet minimalistic surface and delicate plastic strings decoration, whereas the "Side by Side / High Wool", indeed 62 cm tall, forms the third piece in this interesting furniture puzzle.



Furniture tends to group

As we have seen, the theme of repetition is prevalent in Ditte Hammerstrøm's body of work, where benches, boxes and stools multiply and make new forms together. The concentration on pattern and rhythm becomes evident in her works "Out of Focus" (2010 – 2014). Here, several archetypical chairs in white lacquered steel are blending into one, creating an optical illusion of blurriness that makes it difficult to determine where one chair begins and the next one ends, just like, in the words of the artist, a flock of zebras on the savannah...

Besides the sculptural richness of the work, "Out of Focus" can be seen as a metaphor for the alternative perspective proposed by Ditte Hammerstrøm. On what do we focus? How and why? When we gaze at a star in the sky, it disappears, but by changing our eye direction a bit, looking beside or next to it, it reappears in our field of vision.

Ditte Hammerstrøm's design is conceptually strong, and her approach to design has often been likened to that of an anthropologist. *Furniture tends to group in homes through their specific function*, she says. *The easy chair finds the floor lamp, the sofa finds the coffee table and the dining table the dining chairs*. Ditte Hammerstrøm questions these automatic gatherings by deconstructing them and allowing similar types of furniture to group and form new patterns instead.

Apparently, God is not the only one hiding in the details; *The Devil Is In The Details* as well, according to another saying attributed to Friedrich Nietzsche. A small error at the beginning can translate into a useless experiment at the end. Ditte Hammerstrøm definitely knows that. She knows why detail really matters.





« Furniture tends to group in homes through their specific function. The easy chair finds the floor lamp, the sofa approaches the coffee table and the dining table the dining chairs. I try to turn everything a little bit upside down and allow furniture with similar functions to form new patterns together. By combining the same furniture type again and again I want to experiment with the idea of repetition, with the rhythm and the patterns born from this repetition. »





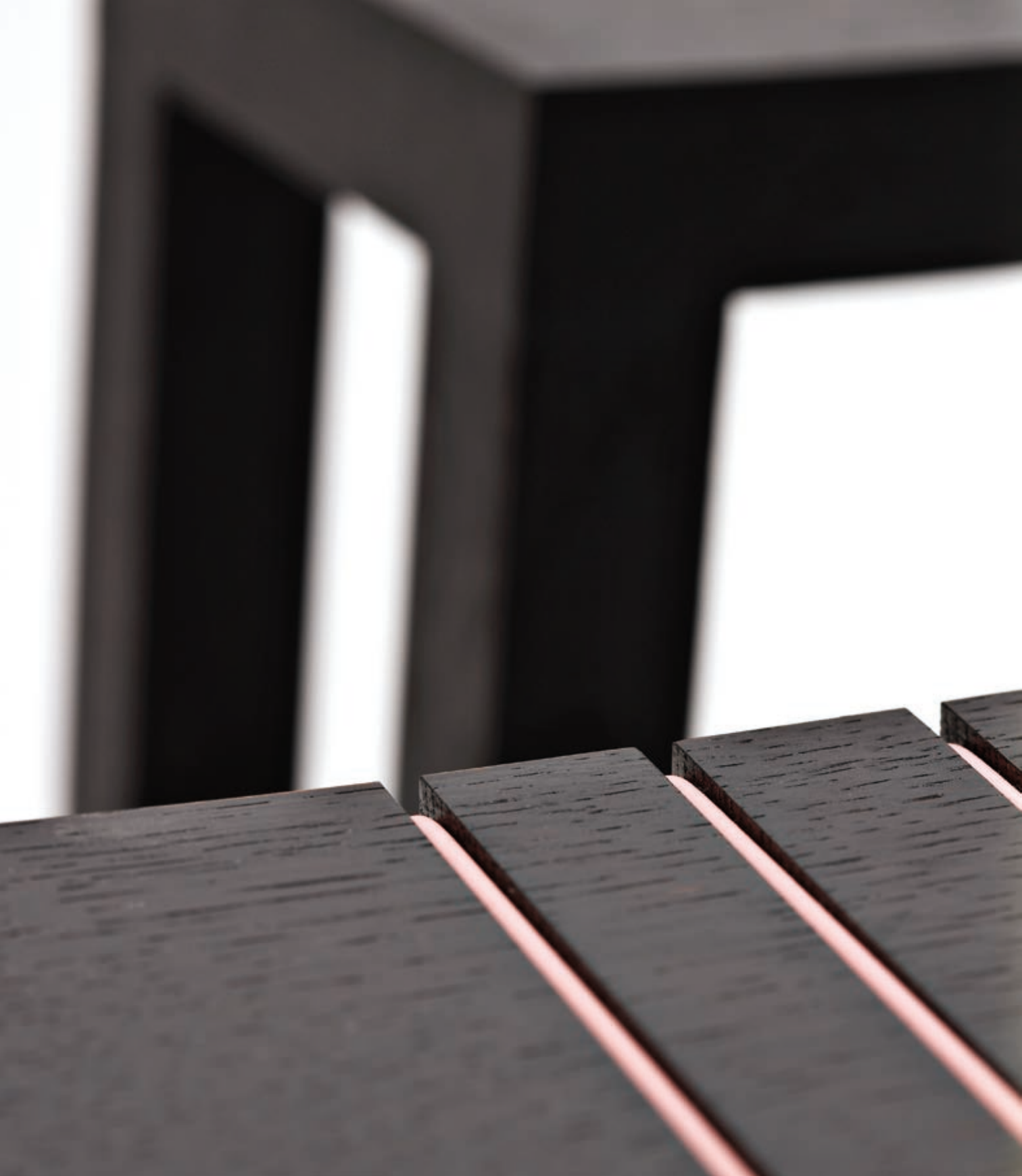
Bistro Light, 2005
Painted wood, foam, plastic string
53 x 30 x 78 cm

Exhibited 2014 Gathering, Design Museum Holon, Israel. Master& Icons, Tomie Ohtake Institute, Sao Paulo and The National Museum, Brasília, Brazil. 2011 Finn Juhl Prisen, Ordrupgaard, Denmark. Crafts of Europe, Eunique Karlsruhe. 2010 Design Danois Contemporain 1997-2009, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris. Unexpected Guests, Museo Bagatti Vasecchi, Milan. MomentumDesign, Punkt Ø, Norway. 2009 Møbellandskaber/Loungescapes, Trapholt, Denmark. 2008 Mint 'forget me not', London. Danish Crafts, 100% Design, London. Mindcraft, Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan. Walk the Plank Award, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen. 2007 The Biennale for Craft and Design, Trapholt, Kolding. Func Art, Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen. 2005 Jubilæumsudstilling, Thorsen Møbler, Århus.



Wall Stools, 2006
 Ash and plastic string
 Stool : 40 × 20 × 40 cm
 Rack : 92 × 10 × 1,5 cm

Exhibited 2010 Design Danois Contemporain 1997–2009. Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris. 2009 Møbellandskaber/
 Loungescapes, Trapholt, Denmark. 2008 Walk the Plank Award, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen. 2007 Art
 Copenhagen, Forum, Copenhagen. Køppe Gallery, Collect, London. 2006 Køppe Gallery, SOFA, Chicago. How to love
 juicy jam & jags, Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen.



Small Tall Stools, 2007
Stained oak wood and plastic string
34 × 17 × 48 cm

Exhibited 2011 Finn Juhl Architectural Prize, Ordrupgaard, Denmark. Pavillion of Art & Design, London, Galerie Maria Wettergren. Pavillon des Arts et du Design, Paris, Galerie Maria Wettergren. Wood Couture, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris. 2010 Design Danois Contemporain 1997–2009, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris. 2009 Møbellandskaber/Loungescapes, Trapholt, Denmark. 2008 Walk the Plank Award, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen. 2007 United colours of drud & køppe, Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen.



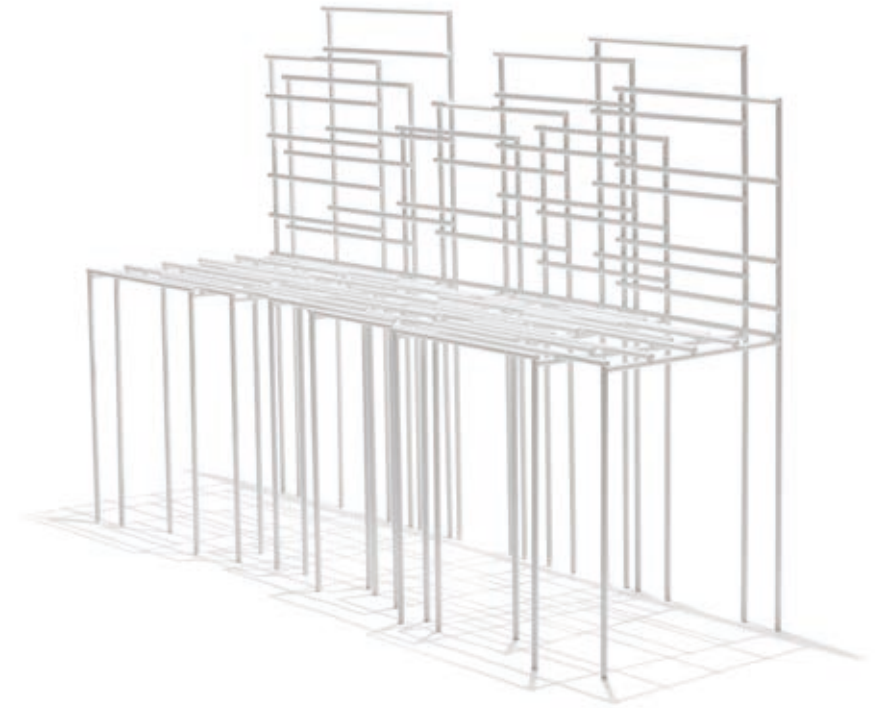
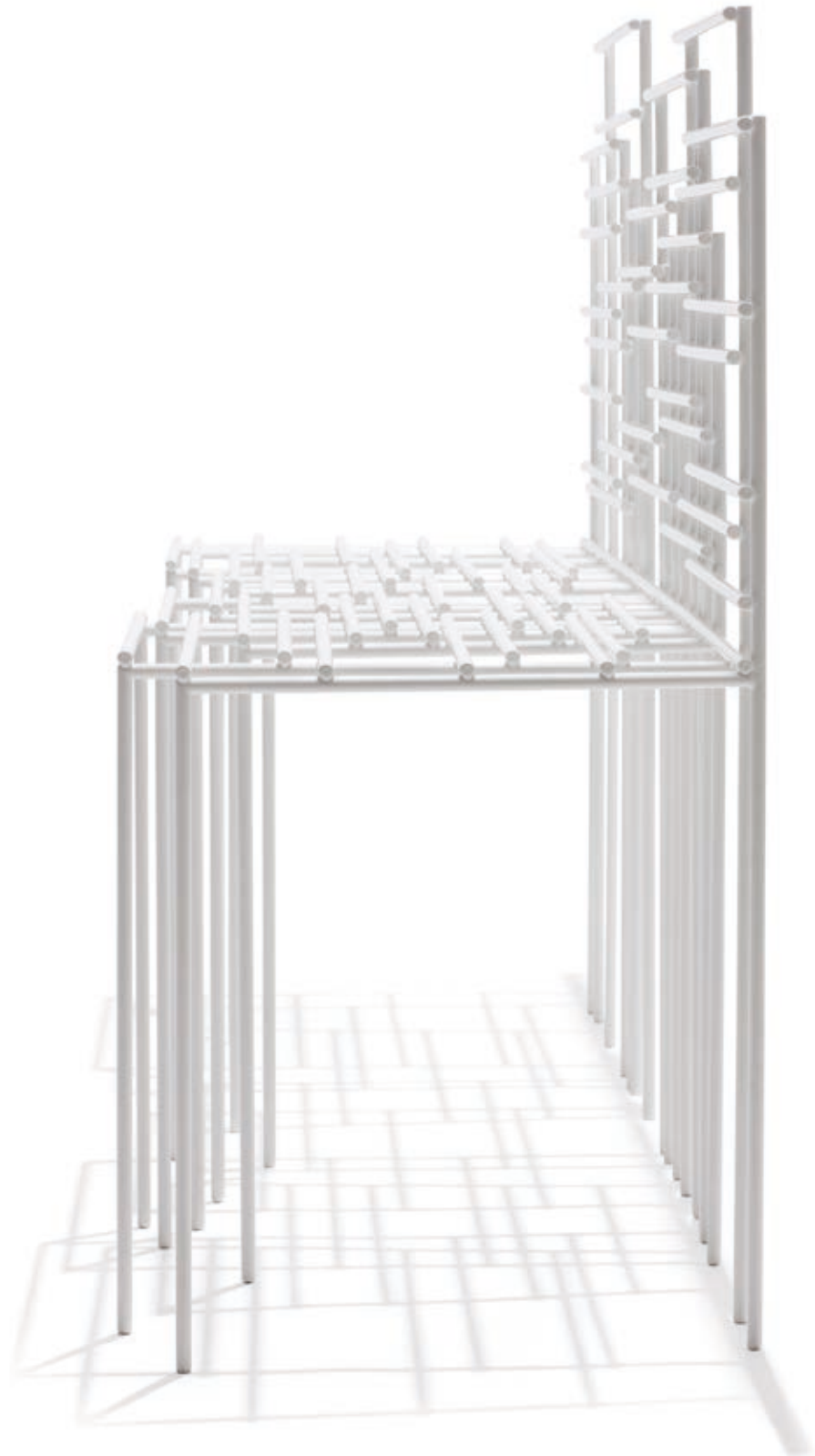
Bunch of Boxes, 2008
Lacquered MDF wood and rope
Ca 70 × 70 × 85 (+ ropes)

Exhibited 2011 Galerie Maria Wettergren, Design Miami, Miami. 2010 Design Danois Contemporain 1997–2009, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris. 2009 Shhh.. Craft is Golden, Mindcraft, Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan. Møbellandskaber/Loungescapes, Trapholt, Denmark. 2008 Walk the Plank Award. Trapholt Museum, Kolding, Denmark. 2008 Walk the Plank Award, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen.



Out of Focus / Chair, 2010
white lacquered steel
60 x 45 x 96,5 cm

Exhibited 2013 DOBBEL, Illums Bolighus, Copenhagen. 2011 WhiteOut, Tokyo Design Center, London Design Festival, Riga Art Space. Galerie Maria Wettergren, Design Miami, Miami. Finn Juhl Architectural Prize, Ordrupgaard, Denmark. Pavillion of Art & Design, London, Galerie Maria Wettergren. 2010 WhiteOut, Cabinetmakers' Autumn Exhibition. Ordrupgaard, Copenhagen.



Out of Focus / Bench, 2014
White lacquered steel
152 x 46 x 100 cm





Side by Side / Low Mohair, 2014
Ash, foam, mohair
212 x 70 X 43 cm



Side by Side / Table-bench, 2014
Ash, plastic string
212 x 70 X 47,5 cm



Side by Side / High Wool, 2014
Ash, wool fabric, plastic string
212 x 76 X 62 cm



Bronze Chair, 2014
Bronze
90 x 44 x 39 cm

DITTE HAMMERSTRØM

Born 1971, lives and works in Copenhagen.

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

Gathering, Design Museum Holon, Israel 2014. / Master & Icons, Tomie Ohtake Institute, Sao Paulo and The National Museum, Brasília, Brazil 2014. / Danske Antibodies, Trapholt, Kolding, Denmark 2014. / The Biennale for Craft and Design, Rundetaarn, Copenhagen 2013. / Galerie Maria Wettergren, Design Miami, Miami 2013. / Trapholts samling anno 2013, Trapholt, Denmark 2013. / Scandinavian Women Designers, Galerie Maria Wettergren, Paris 2013. / DOBBEL, Illums Bolighus, Copenhagen 2013. / Sculptural Furniture, Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Thorvaldsens Museum, Copenhagen 2012. / Urban Play, Søndre havn, Køge, Denmark 2012. / Design Miami, Basel, Galerie Maria Wettergren 2012. / Finn Juhl Architectural Prize, Ordstrupgaard, Denmark, 2011. / OVERLAP, Den Frie Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen 2011. / Design Miami, Miami. Galerie Maria Wettergren 2011. / Crafts of Europe, EUNIQUE 2011, Karlsruhe. / PAD London and Paris, Galerie Maria Wettergren 2011. / WhiteOut, Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Ordstrupgaard, Tokyo Design Center, London Design Festival, Riga Art Space 2010-2011. / Unexpected Guests. Yesterday’s houses, Today’s design. Museo Bagatti Vasecchi. Milan 2010. / Would You Mind? Mindcraft 10, Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan 2010. / MomentumDesign, Punkt Ø. Norway 2010. / Danish Contemporary Design. Gallerie Maria Wettergren, Paris 2010. / Facon, plads, kulør. Rundetaarn, Copenhagen 2010. / Loungescapes. Solo exhibition, Trapholt, Kolding, Denmark 2009. / Shhh.. Craft is Golden. Mindcraft. Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milano 2009. / Walk the Plank Award 2008. Sole exhibition, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen 2008. / Mindcraft. Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan 2008. / Fifty- Fifty. Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Rundetaarn, Copenhagen 2008. / Mindcraft. 100% Design. London 2008. / The Biennale for Craft and Design, Trapholt, Kolding, Denmark 2007. / United Colours of Drud & Køppe. Drud & Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen 2007. / Second Skin. Museum of Contemporary Art, Taipei. Museum of Fine Arts, Kaohsiung 2007. / Made in Denmark. 100% Design, London 2007. / Drud & Køppe Gallery. Collect, London 2007. / Sofastykker. Sophienholm, Lyngb, Denmark 2007. / Func Art. Drud & Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen 2007. / Furniture For When You Are Old, Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Fabrikken for Kunst og Design, Copenhagen 2007. / Honey i’m home. Dansk Design Center, Copenhagen 2006. / Drud & Køppe Gallery. SOFA, Chicago 2006. / The Milky Way Confrontation. Designblok 06, Prague, Czech Republic 2006. / ENTRY 2006. Zollverein, Essen, Germany 2006. / How to love juicy jam & jags. Drud & Køppe Gallery, Copenhagen 2006. / Venne-lyst! Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Frederiksberg Have, Copenhagen 2006. / Playspots. Meldahls Smedie, KADK, Copenhagen 2006. / Wallpaper’s Global Edit exhibition. Salone Internazionale del Mobile, Milan 2006. / REAL Craft in Dialogue. Röhsska Museum, Gothenburg, Sweden 2005. / New Scandinavian Design. San Francisco, Toronto, New York 2005. / Polstergeist. Copenhagen International Furniture Fair 2005. / Jubilæumsudstilling. Thorsen Møbler, Århus, Denmark 2005. / Danish Designers’ Workshop. IMM Cologne 2005. / Furniture Haute Couture. The Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Danish Design Centre, Copenhagen, Smålands Konstarkiv, Varnamo 2004-2005. / The Biennale for Craft and Design, Trapholt, Kolding, Nordjyllands Kunstmuseum, Denmark 2004-2005. / Nomade. Scandinavian Furniture Fair, Copenhagen 2004. / Walk the Plank II. Stockholm, Paris, Kolding, Tokyo, Copenhagen 2003-2004. / Scandinavian Design Beyond the Myth. Europe 2003-2007. / Derfor! Paustian, Copenhagen 2003. / SE REMIX, Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen 2003. / Skin: Surface, Substance and Design. Cooper-Hewitt, New York 2002. / Thingstead, Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition, Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen. Trapholt, Kolding. Form & Design Center, Malmö 2002-2003. / Culture Factory. Scandinavian Furniture Fair, Copenhagen 2002. / Element 2001. Dansk Design Center. Copenhagen 2002. / Life Space, The Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition. Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen 2001. / Graduation show. Øksnehallen, Copenhagen 2000. / Three forms of Light. Designers Block, London 2000.

PRIZES / AWARDS

Finn Juhl Architectural Prize 2011. / Award from the Danish Arts Foundation for curation of the exhibition OVERLAP 2011. / Niels-prisen, Niels Matthiasen Mindelegat 2010. / The Danish Arts Foundation three year Working Grant 2009. / Walk the Plank Award 2008. / Awarded by the Danish Arts Foundation for Sofa Set 2004. / Bo Bedre Prize 2004. / The Danish Arts Foundation two year Working Grant 2002. / Bo Bedre Design Award Element 2001. / Birka Energi Ljusdesignstipendium, 2001.

GRANTS

Danmarks Nationalbanks Jubilæumsfond af 1968. 2000, 2008, 2010, 2013. / Gurli og Paul Madsens Fond 2013. / Danish Crafts 2013. / Grosserer L. F. Foghts Fond, 2010, 2013. / The Danish Arts Foundation, work grant 2004, 2005, 2008, 2013. / The Danish Arts Foundation three year work grant 2009. / Margot og Thorvald Dreyers Fond 2008, 2010, 2013. / OAK Foundation Denmark 2008, 2010. / Ellen og Knud Dalhoff Larsens Fond 2008, 2013. / Konsul George Jorck og Hustru Emma Jorck’s Fond 2008. / Bestsellerfonden 2008. / Harlang & Toksvig Fondet 2008. / Embassy of Denmark, Prague 2006. / Montana Møbler 2005, 2009. / Træfonden 2004, 2008. / The Danish Arts Foundation two year work grant, 2002. / Royal Danish Embassy London, 2000. / Kong Christian Den Tiendes fond 2000. / Designfonden 1996.

REPRESENTED AT

Trapholt, Kolding. Soft Structure 2014. / Trapholt, Kolding. Sofa Set 2013. / Designmuseum Danmark, Copenhagen. Chair for the Person Wishing to be Heard 2008.

EDUCATION

Danmarks Designskole, Institut for Produktdesign, Copenhagen 1994-2000. / Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, Product Design, London 1999.

OTHER

Member of the jury for the Spring Exhibition 2015, Kunsthal Charlottenborg. / Member of the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, School of Design Employer panel 2010-2013. / Curation of the exhibition OVERLAP, in collaboration with artist Jørgen Car-lo Larsen 2011. / Curator at the exhibition Overlap, Den Frie Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen 2011. / Represented by Galerie Maria Wettergren since 2010. / Lecturer at the workshop “Tag plads!”. The Factory of Art and Design 2009. / Guest critic at Architecture & Design, Aalborg University 2007, 2008. / Represented by Køppe Gallery 2006-08. / Lecturer at Krabbesholm højskole 2005. / Member of the Artists’ Society since 2005. / Board member of the Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition 2004-2011. / Member to the Cabinetmakers’ Autumn Exhibition (SE) since 2003. / Co-founder of Culture Corporation 2003-2007. / Own studio in Copenhagen since 2000.

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