

PALACE

ASIA'S ELITE PROPERTY SHOWCASE

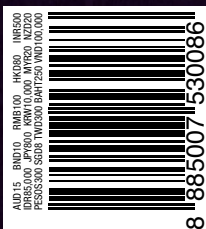


BULGARI BUILDS IN SHANGHAI

STARCHITECT HOMES FOR SALE | DANANG BEACHFRONT
HATTEN CITY, MELAKA | EASTERN & ORIENTAL, PENANG
LEISURE FARM RESORT, ISKANDAR

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January – March 2013



PENTHOUSE BY DIANE VON FURSTENBERG

INTERIORS BY KRI:EIT ASSOCIATES | EVIL ROBOT DESIGNS
LONDON'S SQUINT FURNITURE | MARCO POLO KITCHENS

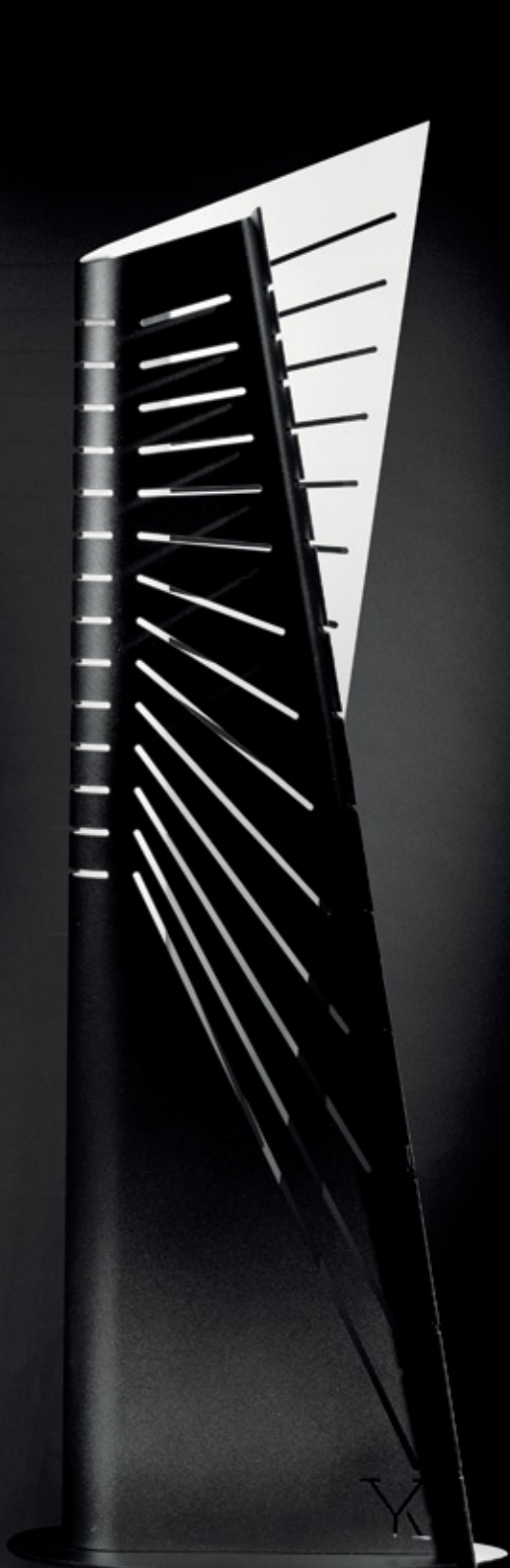


FOLDING STEEL

YKEBANA

by Sian Jay

PERSONALISATION THROUGH
THE TOOLS OF MASS PRODUCTION



FROM LEFT

The *Samothrace* lamp emits neon light and is made of two-tone thermo-lacquered steel plate

Jean-Luc Antoine, based in New York, enjoys working with new materials and production methods

IT'S EASY TO THINK of French designer Jean-Luc Antoine, who describes his creative outlook as an “alliance of art and industry”, as a modern industrialist. His Ykebana furniture collection employs technology, digital design and fast computer-based manufacturing. What’s more, it is mostly made of steel, having been created for Ykebana Edition — the aesthetic department started by entrepreneur Gino Luigi Pisani for Framatec, which manufactures steel structures such as bridges, footbridges and buildings.

Antoine fits no such stereotype, though. Instead, he believes that cutting-edge design, when thoughtfully applied, can enrich people’s lives and be culturally meaningful. “Excessive industrialisation of objects led to their gradual impoverishment and trivialisation,” he says. In response, he suggests “using the best of current industrial tools [and] their ability to mass-produce meaningful objects, all different from each other”.

Antoine seeks to pull free of current standards and practices to develop new ideas — a vision shared by Pisani and the Framatec team. Ykebana consists of eight industrially crafted pieces of furniture — settee, lounge, floor lamp, shelf unit, coffee table, sideboard and two desks — made of contemporary materials, such as cellular rubber, thermo-lacquered surfaces and plasma-cut, sand-blasted steel plates. Each numbered piece is produced in a limited edition and can be customised if desired. The collection culminates many years of exploring and experimenting with new shapes, materials and processes.

The Ykebana furniture pieces are steel sculptures, too. Antoine says: “[Andy] Warhol and [Marcel] Duchamp took industrial objects out of their ordinary settings and made them into masterpieces.” However, whereas most works of Duchamp, a Dadaist and Surrealist painter, were anything but functional, Antoine’s creations are >>

NATURE APPEARS TO CREEP INTO MANY OF THE PIECES, WHILE OTHERS HAVE AN ELEMENT OF FANTASY

FROM TOP
The seat cushions of the *Herbes Folles* settee are covered in calfskin leather while the backrest is upholstered in nylon
The *Submarine* shelf has stainless-steel chain-mail draped across each shelf



>> deeply rooted in functionality, materials, know-how and the limits of technology. These, above all, give direction to the final object. The name ‘Ykebana’ suggests an affinity with the Japanese art of paper folding (*ikebana*), and Antoine acknowledges that there is a similarity: “Our raw material — steel — has some similarities with a sheet of paper.”

The inspiration for the Ykebana designs comes from many sources. The *Samothrace* lamp is clearly inspired by the ancient masterpiece, the *Winged Victory*, in the Louvre, while the lounge — *Tapis Volant* — is a mischievous wink at the flying carpets of the *Arabian Nights*. The *Submarine* shelf appears to imply part of wreckage dredged from the ocean floor and put to a new use. The ocean also inspired the *Miranda* coffee table with its undulating steel base topped with paper-lined glass. Nature appears to creep into many of the pieces, such as the *Herbes Folles* settee that suggests lying among long grass. There is also an element of fantasy — the *Hypnotic* sideboard, for instance, seems to emerge from beneath a moving carpet. “Each object... carries a story that the purchaser can interpret in his own way to make it personal,” says Antoine.






“OUR RAW MATERIAL —
STEEL — HAS SOME
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FROM TOP

The *Hypnotic* sideboard can be ordered in various colours, wood types and textures

The *Tapis Volant* lounge is made with removable cellular rubber blocks

The *Marguerite* bar is a three-drawer unit made of brightened bird's eye maple

Concerning future collaborations with Framatec, Antoine concludes that with technological tools becoming increasingly efficient, it will be possible to make his work available to a greater number of consumers without “falling into the trap of mass production without a soul”. He is already planning the 2013 collection, and says he is working towards a new era of design when people “have fewer objects, but those they have will make more sense”. 



ANTOINE SUGGESTS USING
THE ABILITY OF CURRENT INDUSTRIAL
TOOLS “TO MASS-PRODUCE MEANINGFUL
OBJECTS, ALL DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER”