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DQ PRESENTS
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TOP TEN**
FORCES
& FACES
IN DESIGN



MARC NEWSON
THE ART OF
FUNCTIONALITY

SISTER ACT
ZUSTER'S
FABULOUS FOUR

DUTCH, BUT NOT



Bart Eijking and Patrick de Louwere discuss their multi-disciplinary practice, Studio Lawrence, and explain to Ben Morgan why they migrated the award-winning business to London.

Meet Bart Eijking and Patrick de Louwere in a small café-bar in London's Notting Hill. It's just a stone's throw from where the pair relocated their design studio, Studio Lawrence. But, it's not just the nice food and trendy shops that have lured them across the North Sea.

"We think there's a lot more potential for our work here, and on a bigger platform," Eijking explains.

"Say you're in a trade fair in Holland with your furniture: there aren't that many people stopping over from Saudi Arabia [for example] that want a huge quantity of lamps – but those things happen here. We were in a pretty comfortable position in Holland, but we thought 'maybe we should try this on a bigger stage.'"

Eijking and de Louwere are keen to explore the power of interior products to create interaction and individualism within spaces. With the recent 'To Gather' seating range, they wanted to create "furniture that makes people interact", and started with an angle that encourages people to enter into an exchange.

Despite being devised a world away, a spirit of individuality and customisation means Studio Lawrence's products are perfect for the Australian setting. "Our pieces leave a lot of freedom to the end user. With the 'Wonky' [chair] you can choose your favourite [models], with 'Along These Lines' you can choose your own stripes and rearrange the composition, and with the 'Last

Supper' table, you can also mix and match the colours you want."

"Our designs are very Dutch. They are bold, we try to make them comfortable and tactile, and they are simple and very ideas-based," Eijking says. And yet: "In another way, it's not so Dutch: we have timber chairs (the 'Wonky') that are very lyrical, and strangely shaped. We also have a felt wall covering made in hand-drawn shapes. Our architecture also is a mix between the strict and rectangular with a more lyrical tendency."

The award-winning Studio Lawrence itself grew 'lyrically' from the duo's architectural firm, eijkingdelouwere. Working on a number of architectural and interior projects – from residential to

commercial and civic – they began designing tailored seating and tables.

"People asked where they could buy the table," de Louwere says. "We thought, 'wait a second', and it sank in that [producing products] might be quite interesting."

They've since created an exciting collection of wall coverings, chairs, breakout furniture, lighting, rugs and tables. "There's so much more precision in our architecture since we began designing furniture," de Louwere says. "In that sense, maybe furniture helps the architecture." ●

'Raising' lantern and 'To Gather' sofa were awarded Interior Innovation Awards at imm Cologne in January.

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» 'To Gather' sofa
» 'Wonky' chairs