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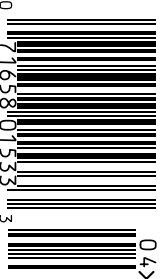
*Our Selection of
Spring Looks*

*Bisazza Reveals
Its Artistic Ambitions*

The
ENDORSEMENTS

*Design's leading voices praise
a new generation of talents*

APRIL 2012
DISPLAY UNTIL MAY 07



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Efficiency Expert

WITH HIS FUNCTIONAL, LOGIC-DRIVEN PRODUCTS, **NICOLAS LE MOIGNE** GETS STRAIGHT TO THE POINT.

PHOTOS DANIELA & TONATIUH

The stereotype that all Swiss people are rigid perfectionists is, of course, no more than a stereotype. And yet, when French-born designer Nicolas Le Moigne's family moved to Switzerland when he was 8 years old, he says in time he began to feel "more and more Swiss" in that regard. His father was an Olympic-level fencing coach, under whom Le Moigne trained seriously until he was 20. When he then decided to attend ECAL, Ronan Bouroullec, his master's degree tutor, pronounced his design style "efficient." "He said, 'You go straight to the point,'" says Le Moigne, whose early projects included an impeccably sleek silver cigar sleeve for Christoffle and a simple plastic screw-on handle that transforms disposable bottles into makeshift watering cans. "I don't consider myself an artist," he says. "Design is about logic and function for me."

Le Moigne's breakout Slip series of furniture, ingeniously crafted from waste materials, was the centerpiece of his solo show last month at London's Libby Sellers Gallery. But the project was actually a treatise against perfectionism more than anything else. As a student, Le Moigne visited the factory of Eternit, a Swiss maker of fiber-reinforced cement for roof tiles and architectural facades; despite the fact that its entire production process was executed lovingly by hand, the

(THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE) Nicolas Le Moigne on polystyrene forms in his Lausanne studio. Slip lamps (2011). Leather Slip stool (2008). (OPPOSITE, TOP TO BOTTOM) Aluminum-and-steel Empenes candlestick holder for Atelier Pfister. Trash cube (2011), made from Eternit leftovers. Finished and in-the-works Slip lamps on a shelf in Le Moigne's studio.



company was so obsessed with consistency that any piece with the slightest flaw, or any cement left unused after three hours, was simply thrown out. Horrified, Le Moigne reacted by developing the Slip stool, made by

haphazardly smushing Eternit's scraps into a mushroom-shaped mold and letting the results air-dry. Each piece is aesthetically unique. "Working with Eternit was completely weird, because it was impossible for them to even imagine that they could produce something with imperfections, or use leftovers," he says.

Nevertheless, the project went on to win Le Moigne a Swiss Federal Design Award and caught the eye of Sellers, who exhibited the stool in 2008. Last fall, she showed his Slip lamp, which is essentially a hollowed-out version of the stool with 10 feet of LED strips fixed inside the core. At the show in February, Le Moigne exhibited a seat made of discarded leather, an idea gained while visiting the de Sede Furniture factory. Crumpled into a mushroom mold the size of his Eternit Slip stool and pumped full of polyurethane foam, the leather Slip stool edges were stitched shut by a saddle maker in Lausanne. "I wanted to keep the roughness of the piece, with all the marks and the folds in the leather, but to add a nice and precise detail with the stitching process," Le Moigne says.

The designer hasn't entirely abandoned his fastidious streak, either. "The Slip series was initiated very early on in Nicolas's career, and his forms have definitely become sharper since then," Sellers says. His recent Podium collection for Berlin's Helmrinderknecht gallery pairs slick high-gloss wood and copper tables with pristine white pedestals, meant to underscore the perceived value of the items they support. "I was interested in the way sculptures or pieces of art are given preciousness and protection" in a museum or gallery setting, Le Moigne says. And in an ironic twist, both the pedestals and the objects they support—its presentation and its elevation—become necessary to fully realize the piece. In the end, both form and function are called into question. Sellers ultimately calls Le Moigne's work both indulgent and entirely rational. "Much like Jasper Morrison and the Bouroullecs," she says, "Nicolas's work finds poetry in its practicality." —MONICA KHEMSUROV