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LEGENDS *at Work*

*Yamamoto takes Holon – Flos turns 50
Giugiaro drives on – Viñoly builds big
Herman Miller rediscovers its DNA*

MAY/JUNE 2012
DISPLAY UNTIL JULY 09



\$6.99

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The Memory Makers

**STUDIO FORMAFANTASMA
MANIPULATES FAMILIARITY
TO REWRITE THE PAST.**

PORTRAIT **LUKAS GOBEL**

When Simone Farresin and Andrea Trimarchi met while starting their studies in Florence, they had a feeling they'd be good design partners. So good, in fact, they decided to apply to

the Design Academy Eindhoven as a team in 2007. "We both had an interest in design, but only design that was happening in Holland," including the work of Droog, says Farresin, 31. "Even though Italy is well known for its design heritage, and we still relate a lot to certain Italian designers from the '60s, '70s, and '80s, it had become much more commercial and traditional." And beyond questions of nationality, "we thought we could probably make one good designer out of two people," says Trimarchi, 29.

The studio's most high-profile collection so far is *Botanica*, an exploration of bioplastics involving a range of organically shaped vessels that look like they were assembled by a forgotten jungle tribe out of leaves and tree bark. Rather than getting bogged down in a discussion of sustainability, the designers imagined the vessels "as if they were created at a moment in time that doesn't exist, and as if the oil era in which we're living never happened," Farresin says. "It was

about how these bioplastics would be used if oil was never involved in the production of plastics."

For the Italian rug company Nodus, Farresin and Trimarchi chose needlepoint—traditionally used to produce rococo motifs and tiny symmetrical roses—as their construction technique of choice, specifically because other contemporary designers had been avoiding it. The pair pushed the craft to new ends by focusing on supersized ornithology and constructed circular rugs with seams that are held together by wooden buttons—a knowing nod to needlepoint's place in fashion. "Thinking about only form and function is a reductive way of looking at objects," Trimarchi says. "Our conceptual approach is a way to find different reasons to produce, or even to discuss, the way we as a society relate to products."

The studio's most cerebral work will open in June, during Design Basel, when Farresin and Trimarchi will introduce it as a



special project for the Vitra Design Museum. Partnering with a charcoal maker from Switzerland, they will explore the material's conflicting uses—it's both a dirty fuel and a purifier for water and air—through a presentation of charcoal made on-site, dystopian drawings, water pitchers, and charcoal-laced bread that the pair claims aids digestion. Also at the fair, they'll present for Fendi an homage to leather—not just cow leather, but skins from other sources, including fish and cork trees. None of it will be concerned with technical performance or efficient manufacturing. "We're interested in the historical and emotional abilities that materials have," Farresin says, "and how they can evoke memories." —TIM MCKEOUGH

(OPPOSITE) Simone Farresin and Andrea Trimarchi. (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT) Domestica low chair (2011). Autarchy installation (2010), made of flour, agricultural waste, and limestone. Migration rug (2011) for Nodus. Colony textile (2011). Botanica (2011).