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CHICAGO'S whatnot RETURNS TO MILAN INT’L FURNITURE FAIR

Chicago, IL—For the third consecutive year, emerging designers from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) will present a new collection of lifestyle products at Milan’s premier independent design showroom, Spazio Rossana Orlandi, during the Salone Internazionale del Mobile (International Furniture Fair), April 9–14, 2013. The color-centric 2013 whatnot collection is the result of a year-long design studio directed by Professors Helen Maria Nugent and Jim TerMeer, both full-time faculty in the department of Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects (AIADO) at SAIC.

Building on the successful launch of the whatnot brand in both Milan and New York City last year, the 2013 collection continues to bring new design concepts to life with a range of contemporary products designed and made in the USA. This year each of the 16 designers has approached color as a critical question. The subsequent collection of “whatnots” explore the visceral, perceptual, associative, emotional, and conceptual potential of color in all its permutations—muted, primary, fluorescent, functional, natural, and erotic.

The eclectic collection includes a multicolored doorstop, black glass mirror, quilt with fluorescent seams, calendar with 365 shades of grey, color-shifting paper timer, inscribed wineglass, leather handbag in natural leather and raw sheep’s wool, ruler divided by color and shapes, digital app of living color, atmospheric and ambient table lamp, wallet colored by currencies, napping pillow with gentle gradations, glass brooch filled with vibrant ink, and a sash in the color and material of skin.

The entire collection will be presented on the pedana within the buzzing central courtyard of Spazio Rossana Orlandi. The installation will include a colorful display system, custom-built dining table, and eight super-bright stools. All of the products will be available for purchase in the gallery’s 2nd floor retail shop.


After a strong premiere in Milan, the 2012 design exhibition traveled to Noho’s Future Perfect Pop-up Shop during New York City’s International Contemporary Furniture Fair. Student designs were featured by Fast Company magazine blog Co.DESIGN, British National Newspaper the Independent, and Dexigner.com.
LOADED, SAIC’s presentation at Spazio Rossana Orlandi during the 2011 Milan International Furniture Fair, welcomed more than 10,000 visitors during its six day run in Milan and was covered by Domus, New York Magazine, the Huffington Post, Core77, the Architect’s Newspaper, and Inhabitat—which called it “one of our favorite exhibits at this year’s fair.” The provocative objects presented in LOADED explored the history, physicality, and currency of two catalytic materials: iron and sugar. In addition to the 13 unique objects (lighting, tableware, and jewelry) created for the exhibit, two of the projects—one in sugar, the other in iron—were produced in multiples specifically for the show. Elements of the exhibition design also engaged in this investigation, resulting in custom cast-iron display fixtures and sculptural sugar props. Each object from LOADED was later placed on view in City of Chicago Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s personal office.

High-resolution press images from the project are available online at saic.edu/images or by contacting John Eding. Project summaries, process images, and more information are available at saic.edu/whatnot.

School of the Art Institute of Chicago: whatnot
Milan International Furniture Fair 2013
April 9–14, 2013
9 a.m.–8 p.m.
Spazio Rossana Orlandi
Via Matteo Bandello 14/16, 20123 Milano
+39 02 46 74 47-1 rossanaorlandi.com

Other presentations at Spazio Rossana Orlandi during the fair include projects by Piet Hein Eek, Thomas Eyck, Formafantasma, Jaime Hayon for &Traditional Scholten and Baijings for Georg Jensen, Itay Ohaly, BCXSY, Booo Bulbs, and Os and Oos.

whatnot at the AIADO and Fashion Graduate Exhibition
June 9–July 5
Reception: Monday, June 10, 6:00–8:00 p.m.
Sullivan Galleries, 33 S. State St., 7th floor
Showcasing design from the Department of Architecture, Interior Architecture, and Designed Objects, and the Department of Fashion, this exhibition brings together thesis work by graduating students that explores recent innovations in material, technology, and form. whatnot projects will also be on display.

ABOUT THE SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO
A leader in educating artists, designers, and scholars since 1866, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) offers nationally accredited undergraduate and graduate degrees and post-baccalaureate programs to more than 3,200 students from around the globe. SAIC also provides adults, high school students, and children with the opportunity to flourish in a variety of courses, workshops, certificate programs, and camps through its Continuing Studies program. Located in the heart of Chicago, SAIC has an educational philosophy built upon an interdisciplinary approach to art and design, giving students unparalleled opportunities to develop their creative and critical abilities, while working with renowned faculty who include many of the leading practitioners in their fields. SAIC’s resources include the Art Institute of Chicago and its new Modern Wing; numerous special collections and programming venues provide students with exceptional exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and performances. For more information, please visit saic.edu.

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