

RIKKERT PAAUW



photo by Jet van Zwieten

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OPENING DRINK

THURSDAY

16.02.2017 | 4-9^{PM}

gallery valerie_traan

reyndersstraat 12
2000 antwerp | belgium
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www.valerietraan.be

Thu – Fri – Sat: 2–6 pm
or by appointment

The aesthetics of local garbage

For Dutch designer **Rikkert Paauw**, the ground materials for building design simply lay in the streets. One of his favorite occupations consists of creating design on location, made out of thrown away materials he finds on the spot. In Toulon for instance, he constructed a table out of tiles found in the neighborhood, in Milan garbage wood resulted in a lamp post and in Vienna old littered shelves metamorphosed into a small public building. “Using garbage is pure logics”, the designer says. “If I were to live in the woods, I’d use branches of trees”.

By transforming the city’s waste into installations within that same city, Rikkert keeps the circle of his circular design very short and builds a story that goes far beyond sustainability or reuse. He creates artful concrescences of the environment, termite mounds — so to speak — within the city that describes its inhabitants. “For instance, I noticed that the chipboards in Saint-Petersburg were a lot more beautiful than elsewhere”, tells Rikkert. “In Milan, I remarked that the communication with the people ran smoother and that the litter in general was more colorful and smooth”.

The shape of Rikkert’s work is most of the time determined by his findings, and thus by coincidence. Despite the element of Fate, Rikkert upholds a very

clear design language. He manages to collate different rough forms and a waver of colors in one serene design. His natural feeling for rhythm and color is astounding. Rikkert Paauw literally creates order in chaos.

Local litter isn’t the only darling of this designer. Modular design is another one. Make that: modularity pushed to the extreme. For a project in Sydney he’d thought up *Verbindingstuk*, a metal linker to fasten a horizontal beam to a vertical one. That simple object allows people from all over the world to build anything with the (thrown away) woods locally available. Design doesn’t get more modular than this. Although: “At Valerie Traan I’ll present a closet that consists solely of steal pins put in the wall”, Rikkert says. “The shelves come from the streets or wherever I find them”. This is a closet that can be reshaped endlessly.

Rikkert will also show unassigned work: an adapted Ikea chair he found in the streets. “It’s a simple, basic chair with a well shaped seat”, he explains. “I didn’t like the trestle of the chair though, so I changed it with another one I’ve found”. And so, a recycled Ikea chair becomes a *pièce de résistance*. Consider it the cliffhanger of the show.

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