

No. 27

Amazingly luxurious or completely natural

interzum award 2007 inspires with variety and top-quality products

150 innovative product submissions, 51 awards, of which eight in the highest category "best of the best": These are the hard facts, delivered after several hours' deliberation by a very satisfied jury as part of this year's interzum award intelligent material & design. These figures clearly show the positive development of the competition, held for the fourth year and organised by Koelnmesse in co-operation with red dot projects. With their products and solutions in three categories – materials and surfaces, upholstered furniture and bedding, and fittings, glass and light – companies in the international furniture supply industry are setting new industry standards. "The interzum award is all about high-end products with outstanding function and extremely aesthetic design. The many new developments also provide motivation for more future innovations in line with the market" – said jury member Professor Dr. Peter Zec in his summary. The managing CEO of Design Zentrums Nordrhein Westfalen competently chaired the distinguished panel of judges again this year.

Clear judging criteria

After the initial viewing of the components, materials and products, the international top-class jury knew for certain that they were in for an interesting discussion: Japanese designer and architect Masayo Awe, designer Ulrich Skrypalle from the designafairs agency, designer Martin Bergmann from EOOS Design in Austria and Danny Venlet from Venlet Interior Architecture in Brussels were all carried away by the huge selection and fascinating solutions. Touch, try out, choose – the jury used the same process for all products. In order to guarantee a fair decision, the judging was subject to definite criteria. Our five judges examined the products according to degree of innovation,



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function, material quality, form and sustainability. And there were more than a few surprises in store for the experienced designers and architects.

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Innovations between ecology and luxury

The international companies presented attractive organic and natural products alongside their high-tech materials, and a new type of lighting system with extraordinary applications shone down on the competition, which will further increase both the emotional value and comfort of furniture. For kitchens and wardrobes especially, these lighting solutions offer pure luxury. Electrical runner solutions for drawer systems seemed to be just as lavish: it seems unlikely that anyone will invent a more gentle closing mechanism. And yet, designers continue to perfect storage space in the kitchen – the tiniest remaining corner is used in an elegant, technical way. And it's all about lightweight materials, where new connective solutions further simplify manufacturing and make room for other applications. Developments with sound-absorbing attributes add a pleasant, low noise atmosphere. The innovative companies also demonstrated how paper and tables will in future combine into one aesthetic product. And the production machinery area was also host to a new design consciousness. These new stylish machines will surely increase the joy of working at workplaces.

"The topics of comfort and emotionality continue to play a major role in the supply industry," according to designer Martin Bergmann. "We are presented with many technical solutions that inspire us with their sophisticated intelligent function". Architect Masayo Awe adds: "Suppliers want to make people's lives easier – with particularly comfortable coverings or with materials that make heavy lifting a thing of the past. Another trend is ecological interior design: In the future, the industry will focus more on using natural materials and thinking ecologically. "Award-winning products presented in glamorous surroundings.

The winners of the interzum award will be announced on May 8th 2007 as part of a festive awards ceremony. During interzum 2007, there will be an exhibition of the winning products. Before the international furniture trade fair in Cologne at the imm cologne in 2008, red dot edition publishing will also release the

international interzum yearbook. The yearbook gives an overview of the winning products from the supply industry. Furthermore, detailed presentations of the winning products have been made available at www.interzum-award.de.