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LEADING BY DESIGN



EXPRESSIVE
ELEGANCE

WITH LAURA HARRIER

INTRODUCING 2024'S CHICEST DESIGN TREND

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talking sense

Danish studio Norm Architects is at the helm of a sensual design movement – and its collaboration with Italian furniture company Lema is a case in point

Norm Architects is one of a select few practices making the case for truly people-led design with its work, which is grounded in a soft, pared-back aesthetic and an effort to appeal to the senses. Its ongoing collaboration with Italian furniture company Lema turns this essentialist approach into a series of covetable pieces: we spoke to designer Kasper Ronn Von Lotzbeck to find out more.

Your practice often gets associated with minimalism – how would you describe your approach to design?

We refer to it as essential, or soft minimalism. We believe that it's important for human welfare to be connected to nature; these days, a lot of people miss that in their lives. Our minimalism is much about using materials that activate the senses – when you walk on a wooden floor, you hear your own footsteps; or when you walk on a soft carpet, you feel cosy and warm. It's not really minimalist – we use decorations from time to time – but it's always in an essential way.

In collaborating with Lema, how did you find combining the values of the brand with those of your practice?

In the beginning, we talked about how we could collaborate and where we had common ground. Very quickly, you end up in a place where you both belong. The Fred dining chair from last year [which uses brass fixtures] is a good example of this. Metals in some way come from nature, and metal accents are a big part of Italian design. If you look at the form of the chair itself, everything



is rounded and soft. Shape and form has always been a part of Italian design.

With recent launches like the Claire armchair and the Soffio sofa, how do you hope they'll be used?

In designing the Claire armchair, we wanted to make an iconic piece that stands out in the room. The Soffio was a little more complicated: our approach was to make it sustainable without it being too obvious – it can be taken completely apart and reused, recycled or repaired.



The Soffio sofa with the Francis coffee tables; the Claire armchair

What is it like designing a furniture piece compared to an interior?

I think the aesthetic approach is very much the same. With both, you work on shapes, forms and material combinations. When you design a chair, it's going to have multiple lives in different settings – and if good enough, it's going to end up as a vintage piece and be cared for for many years. The same goes for spaces: if you design a house, you strive to choose the best materials that are durable and will last for many years.



normmcp.com; lemamobili.com