

WWD

Milan Exhibit Explores How Rick Owens Furniture Inspired Other Designers

Opening in tandem with Milan Design Week, the exhibit was orchestrated by New York-based gallery Galerie Philia.

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The "Rick Owens Dialog with Emerging Italian Designers" exhibit in Milan during Design Week. COURTESY OF GALERIE PHILIA

IN CONVERSATION: Rick Owens' penchant for brutalist furniture is second only to his dark-tinged fashion concoctions, and both have served as an endless source of inspiration for designers worldwide.

On the eve of the official start of Salone del Mobile in Milan, New York-based Galerie Philia gallery, which represents Owens' furniture collections, hosted a vernissage showcasing design pieces from the acclaimed Owens alongside the works of younger Italy-based designers, with the aim of establishing a dialogue.

"We're not supporting them, it's a dialogue, this was orchestrated in such a nice way and it was some kind of homage, as in Rick Owens' furniture inspiring other people... it's just a very minimal but very interesting collaboration," Michèle Lamy, Owens' life partner and muse, told WWD at the event.

Among Owens' design objects on show, the exhibit featured a minimalist bench upholstered in camel hair, an alabaster small table with a moose antler as a foot, as well as smaller knickknacks such as bronze vases and candle holders.



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Lamy said that after almost 15 years since the launch of the category – which was first introduced in 2007 and **has spawned a book** and international exhibitions – furniture is evolving to encompass bigger pieces with an architectural bent, but she stressed how the smaller items, too, retain a certain refinement and boast the same “thoughtfulness and spirit as the bigger ones.”

Owens' pieces were arranged in a dimly lit gallery space in southern Milan flanked by the works of design studios dAM Atelier; Draga & Aurel; Lorenzo Bini; Agustina Bottoni; Samuel Costantini; Cara and Davide; Pietro Franceschini, and Morghen Studio.

For instance, Costantini lent his Underwood candle holders, crafted from brass in the shape of bark, for the exhibition, while Franceschini explored the use of marble for his futuristic stools featuring rounded shapes.

“The gallery found its own way to present Owens' pieces and being a big supporter of them,” said Lamy.



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