



Q & A

Behind the Designs

A Peek into the Creative Minds of
Some of the World's Top Designers

Story by Saxon Henry

In an ongoing series, *Design District Magazine* sits down with some of Miami's top creative designers to get a glimpse into the creative mindset. In this issue we spoke with industrial designer **Andreas Reichert**. Based in Berlin, Reichert works for international labels, including Dieter Knoll, Egoform, Interprofil and Leolux.

Q Tell me about the process you go through when you begin the creation of a new product. Do your ideas usually come swiftly, or do they grow slowly over time?

A I start without a concrete idea or definite use; rather, I begin the design process working toward a certain theme with the "hint of an idea." I then look for ideas and uses in 2-D sketches and models. Once I have found a suitable approach, the creative process continues on another, more concrete level. The design concept is gradually developed from this process. My most important task is to choose the right paths from the many, many alternatives, so that there is a kind of "internal logic" for the design at the end of the consolidating process. This process could be described as "function follows form" rather than "form follows function."

Are you always sketching and doodling to get new ideas down on paper?

Yes. I begin with simple sketches then build small models in order to produce a 3-D design

on the computer. Depending on the design in question, this is followed by a full-scale model or partial model.

It's as if your creations have a particular personality. Is making furniture functional and personable an important combination?

Yes, that's exactly what I think it is. Today's generation of high-quality furniture should be functional and emotional. What is important here is how these emotional characteristics come about. Do they stem from a concept? Are they genuine and will they last? This "furniture with character" is my response to apathy and lack of care in design. For example, with *B-flat*, I see the graphic appearance as an emotional value.

What do you love most about what you do?

I love it when a project is ready to go into production and when I have a really good feeling about the design — this really warms my heart. This usually happens in the unspectacular and pragmatic surroundings of a factory, which makes the situation all the more distinct and special.

When you were a child, were there signs that you would be involved in some type of design?

The first indication was my birth itself. I was born two months premature — in order to take in everything as early as possible! One real indication was how I used to wrap the Christmas presents I had bought for my family. Even when I was

very small, I would always wrap each of my presents in different and very unusual ways. It was fun to surprise my family before they opened the presents.

From where do you draw your inspiration for new products?

My girlfriend is an artist with an international audience, so I spend a lot of my free time traveling to exhibitions and art fairs. These trips leave amazing impressions. The cities and countries, people, architecture and contemporary art are all sources of inspiration. And my new home, Berlin, is teeming with life.

Have there been other designers/architects/artists/artisans who have inspired you?

I am a great admirer of Eileen Gray, Ray and Charles Eames, Herzog and de Meuron, Patricia Urquiola and Jean-Marie Massaud. I don't want to copy them, but do try to learn from them without overlooking my own personality.

What do you want the readers to know about you?

I am reserved and sensitive, but I also have a daring streak. I love life and people, and at times it saddens me to see so much unnecessary suffering in the world. My producers and I are passionate in our efforts to ensure that our products are created with the utmost care and that they will give people real and lasting pleasure. ♦