

"Tools for Life" by OMA for Knoll Debuts at Salone Internazionale del Mobile

MILAN, Italy, April 8, 2013 — Knoll, Inc. introduces "Tools for Life," a new collection of furniture by OMA, the collaborative practice co-founded by Dutch architect Rem Koolhaas in 1975. Knoll tapped Koolhaas, one of the most provocative thinkers and daring form-makers of his generation, to help mark its 75th anniversary. With this collection, Koolhaas joins Knoll's pantheon of modern masters, which includes such figures as Mies van der Rohe, Eero Saarinen and Frank Gehry.

"Tools for Life" offers a contemporary interface between furniture and people, supporting the ebb and flow of work and social life, while adjusting to the different needs of both.

The collection will be on view during the 2013 Salone Internazionale del Mobile at Prada's Milan exhibition space at via Fogazzaro, 36, where the pieces were first previewed during the Fall Men's Show earlier this year. Public exhibition hours are 10:00 AM - 8:00 PM, Tuesday, April 9 and Wednesday, April 10.

Commenting on the endeavor, Rem Koolhaas said, "We wanted to create a range of furniture that performs in very precise but also in completely unpredictable ways, furniture that not only contributes to the interior but also to the animation."

At the core of the collection is Koolhaas's belief that furniture should be understood as a high-performance tool rather than a design statement.

"I want to talk about work and not the office—the distinction being that today people work everywhere," added Benjamin Pardo, Knoll design director. "With that in mind, the OMA pieces are more kinetic than static: many are easily adjustable so that with changes in height, adjacency and degree of privacy, almost any space can be transformed to a place of work."

The simple, no-nonsense palette makes the furniture compatible with a range of residential and workplace interiors. Clear acrylic is juxtaposed with concrete; glass with leather; travertine with steel—beguiling and engaging contrasts that draw attention to individual pieces.

Horizontal "Tools for Life"

The dynamic 04 Counter is the collection's signature piece. Beginning as a monolithic stack of three horizontal beams, the user can rotate the top two beams and transform this wall-like unit into a series of shelves and cantilevered benches—a metamorphosis from a spatial partition to a communal gathering place. Rigorous engineering and a system of internal bearings and rails facilitate 360 degrees of movement. Patterned wood grain and leather surfaces provide unexpected and subtly sensuous contrasts.

For individual focused or group collaborative work, the 05 Round Table and 06 Table integrate mechanical sophistication with seemingly effortless effect. Both can be adjusted to accommodate lounge seating or even standing. The 05 Round Table features a travertine top with a travertine base or an acrylic top with an aluminum base. An exposed mechanism, powered by an electric motor, elevates or lowers the table.

Conceived as an executive desk, the 06 Table has a two-piece laminated glass top. The two horizontal surfaces, one a work surface and the other intended for storage, are separated by four round, glass columns.

The 03 Coffee Table is a stack of three transparent boxes constructed of clear acrylic. Internal slides allow the individual elements to be rotated and cantilevered, giving users the ability to adjust its overall shape depending on changing needs.

Seating "Tools for Life"

Comfort and privacy are explored in the collection's two primary seating pieces: 01 Arm Chair and 02 Arm Chair with high back. The 01 Arm Chair is a height-adjustable, swivel lounge chair with a clear acrylic exterior frame and leather interior upholstery. A mechanical column base with a signature red band provides height adjustment at the touch of a button. A concrete base plate grounds the chair. The 02 Arm Chair with high back has the same features, while offering uniquely flexible interior cushioning that when unfolded provides an enveloping privacy.

Adding to the selection, the 11 Floor Seating, featuring simple upholstered cushions, provides alternate seating heights for work, reflection or relaxation.

The 07 Bench and 08 Perch round out the seating options. The modular bench, made of interconnecting and corner blocks, can be adapted based on user needs. A mortise and tenon mechanism locks the blocks in line; a selection of materials allows for seemingly endless combinations. The 08 Perch is an adjustable stool with an internal gas assist mechanism. Featuring an upholstered seat, the Perch consists of three cylinders; the top and bottom cylinders are wood; the middle one is acrylic. Offering height adjustment from 19 to 30 inches, the Perch accommodates different work requirements.

Ancillary "Tools for Life"

The 09 Screen can be used to partition specific zones within an overall open space. A base of clear acrylic supports panels of foamed aluminum, travertine or wood grain laminate that can be cantilevered off-center.

The 10 Credenza serves as a complementary piece to any and all of the horizontal table elements by providing storage pockets that are accessed by a hinged lid.

About OMA

OMA is a leading international partnership practicing architecture, urbanism, and cultural analysis. OMA's buildings and masterplans around the world insist on intelligent forms while inventing new possibilities for content and everyday use. AMO, a research and design studio, works in areas beyond architecture that today have an increasing influence on architecture itself: media, politics, renewable energy, technology, publishing, fashion and cultural advisory.

About Knoll

Knoll is the recipient of the 2011 National Design Award for Corporate and Institutional Achievement from the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt, National Design Museum. Since 1938, Knoll has been recognized internationally for creating workplace and residential furnishings that inspire, evolve, and endure. Today, its commitment to modern design, understanding of the workplace, and dedication to sustainable design have yielded a unique portfolio of products that respond and adapt to changing needs. Knoll is aligned with the U.S. Green Building Council and the Canadian Green Building Council and can help companies achieve Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design LEED workplace certification. Knoll is the founding sponsor of the World Monuments Fund Modernism at Risk initiative. knoll.com.

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