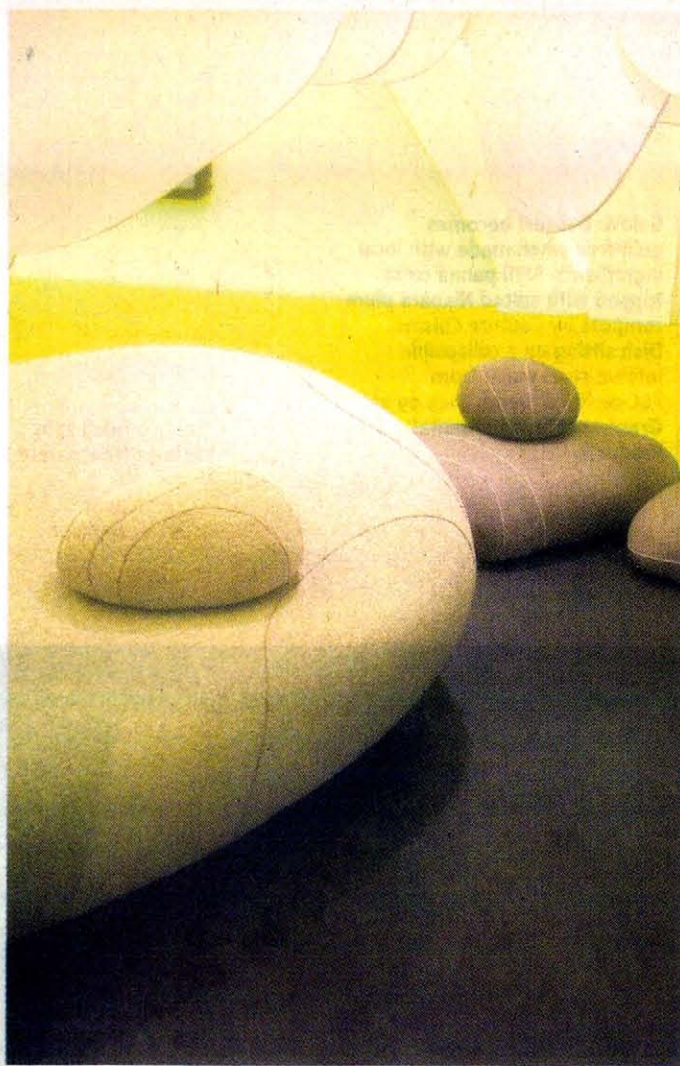


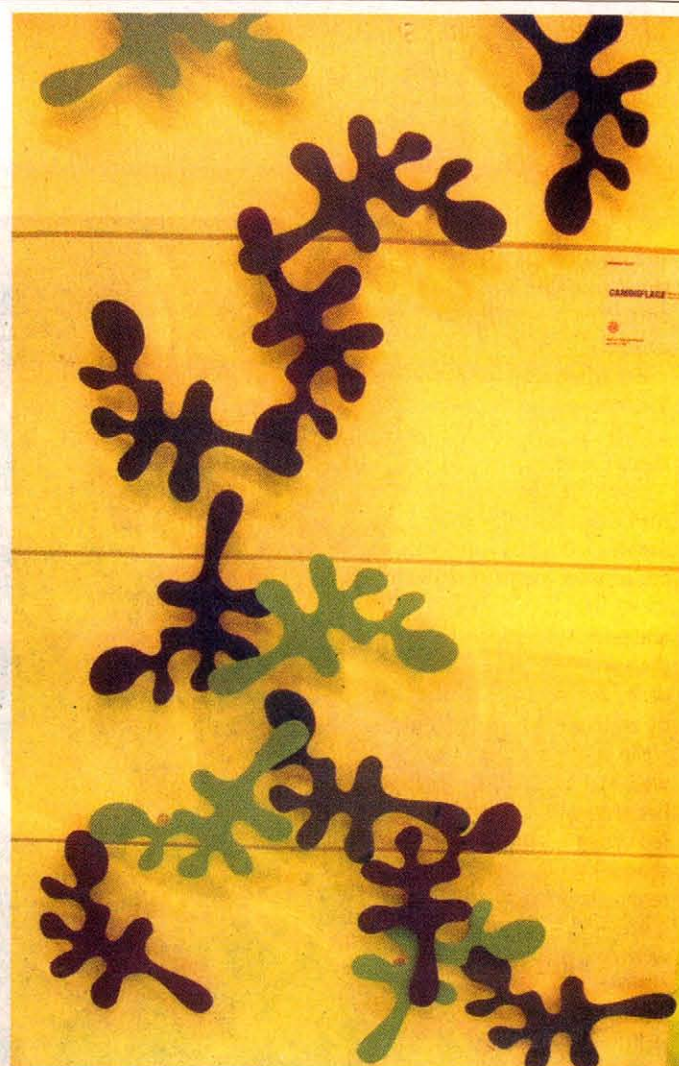
DESIGN



Stephanie Marin's Living Stone sofas and ottomans



Canada's Loyal Loot's Log Bowls.



Red dot design award winner Camouflage coat hooks.

Into the woods and back to nature

Subtle earth tones and organic shapes dominated the decor at London's 14th annual 100% Design show



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The sun that shone for the duration of London Design Week seemed to draw its energy from the undeniable glow emanating from the 100 per cent Design show held at Earls Court last month. That's because the backdrop for the

14th annual showcase of home-decor items by top international designers was an eye-popping shade of citrus yellow. The show's creative director, furniture designer Tom Dixon, admitted that he is not particularly fond of the colour, but said he wanted to add a bright, punchy aura to an event that this year emphasized sensible, homespun design over fun and frivolity. The resulting ocean of lemon-coloured broadloom horrified some exhibitors, while others basked in its outrageous light. It also brightened up Dixon's

own collection of lamps and chairs, which he dubbed "A Bit of Rough" to relate his style to the unpretentious and robust side of British culture, the side that invented pubs and punk. Despite this, Dixon's booth came off looking very bling with its glass mirror ball lights and copper-finished Blow lights. Even his giveaway gold lamé tote bag became a much-coveted souvenir. But such glitz was the exception to the rule at this year's show. **Death to damask:** Last year's riot of damask gave way to restrained, nature-based designs

of twigs, leaves, boulders, and soft curves. Not surprisingly, the show's red dot design award for hot new product went to Camouflage, coat hooks designed by Busk + Herzog, of powder-coated steel in flat, blobs the colour of leaves in sunlight (lime), leaves in shade (olive) and the shadow itself (aubergine). A three-piece package is £61 (\$115). **Into the woods:** Our concern with nature's frailty has bred a passion for wood, whether its reclaimed, engineered or mimicked, as in the funky dresser designed by Richard Woods

and Sebastian Wrong for the British producer of quality limited-edition pieces, Established and Sons. Canada's Loyal Loot showed its Log Bowls: hollowed-out logs lined with vivid high-gloss enamel centres. Woodoo Group's Warrior Stools used casters to give chunky rounds of tree trunks a floating aspect. The white metal handles added a contemporary twist. Solid teak baths and sinks by William Garvey were finished with an oil and resin mixture that is as easy to clean as ceramic fixtures.

Most of the woods were pale or cool in tone: Scandinavian pine, white oak and walnut, unstained or minimally finished. **Touchy-feely furnishings:** Artisan was king at this year's show: Objects were filled with meanings that transcended their everyday uses. Limited editions or one-of-a-kind items abounded, pieces that people could relate to on an emotional level because of their uniqueness. Take Charlene Mullen's white wool throw cushions embroidered with such London landmarks as the London Bridge in black thread and enlivened by a little red double-decker bus chugging past. **Knitted ottomans** by German design duo Sandra Tan and Johannes Schiebe replicate the shapes, textures and colours of sea urchins. Stephanie Marin's Living Stone sofas and ottomans, handmade in the South of France from eco-friendly felted wool, echoed the smoothness of boulders. **Big lamps:** Oversized floor lamps, like the human-sized models designed by Istanbul-based Autobahn and Denmark's Design-by-Us, shed an impressive, yet surprisingly subtle light. Greek-born British designer Sotis Filippides's big, ceramic table lamps in gritty black and earth tones were monumental yet simple. **The delight factor:** The show stopper had to be the Pencil Bench designed by identical twins Will and Sam Boex of Boex 3D Creative Solutions. They wanted to design a simple and attractive piece of furniture inspired by an everyday



Boldly striped Corian totem sinks in Missoni stripes.

office object. The result is 1,625 pink pencils mounted onto a walnut bench with an eraser end for padding. **Upcycling:** Turning cast-off furnishings into artist reinventions continues to reach aesthetic heights. Squint, a company started by sculptor Lisa Whatmough, covers old lamps, chandeliers and furniture with vintage and contemporary fabrics creating one-offs that sell for thousands of pounds. Squint's lime-green, velvet-clad chandeliers go for £1,900 (\$3,570); her floor lamps are £950 (\$1,785). The highlight in this category is a fifties dresser that designer Zoe Murphy veneered with colourful silk-screened wood and other laminates to evoke old-fashioned Formica patterns. **Department of the bizarre:** Alex Randall of Britain's Jericho Hands wowed everyone with a magnificent light made from salvaged brass organ pipes, hung in a quirky Bedouin tent replete with flowers and Persian carpets. Clinging to the draperies around the tent were stuffed squirrels, each holding a small light in its mouth. Inside, suspended around the baroque light fixture were dozens of stuffed pigeons, vermin as putti. **Flat pack:** Rupert McKelvie's chairs and tables are reversible flat puzzle pieces that can be assembled with the coloured side in or out. James Plant of James Plant Design has come up with the Murphy-bed equivalent of a dining room. Open the doors of his slim storage unit and out drops an oak dining-room table, two benches and a floor surrounded by wallpapered walls. After spending a day traipsing over citrus broadloom at this year's show, I began to notice this signature colour all over town: in the entrance to the Tate Modern's Cy Twombly show, at the V&A's Cold War Modern exhibition. Even the signs on the double-decker buses made me wish I had brought my sunglasses.

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