

CAMOU

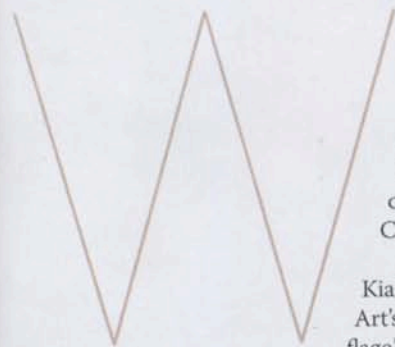
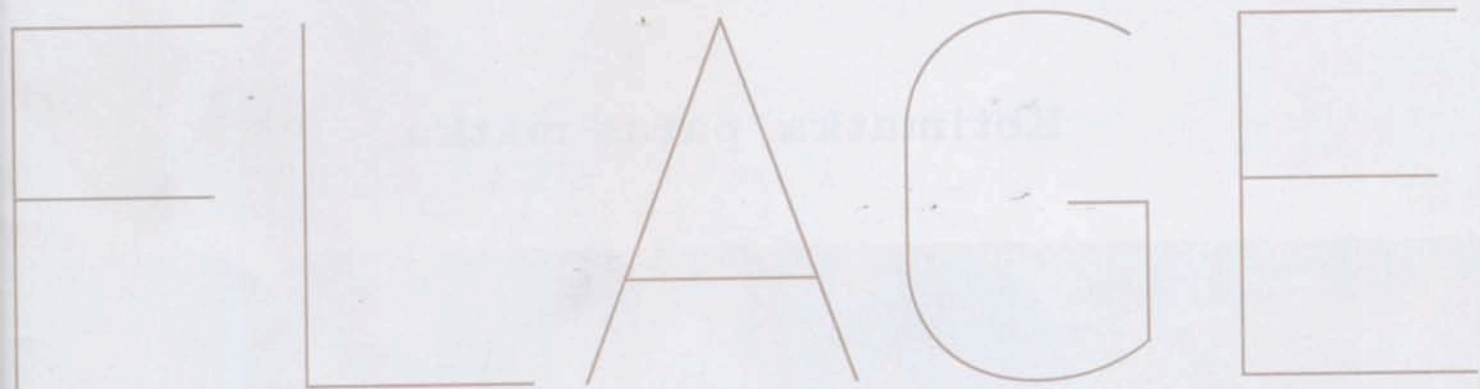
SEDUCTIVE

WHEN ART AND DESIGN SHACK UP TOGETHER AT KIASMA, WILL IT BE LOVE OR WAR?

TEXT BY SILJA KUDEL



Kaisu Koivisto's horny reinterpretation of a famous design classic.



What does the word "camouflage" conjure in your mind? Patterns of disguise? Animal colouration? Military apparel? Concealment through exposure? All are apt metaphors for the Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art's summer exhibition, "Camouflage." Opening mid-June, the show is

a fusion of contemporary art and design, two disciplines that often struggle to disguise their mutual affection.

"Both camps feel attracted to the ideas and practices of the other, yet they frequently try to preserve the dividing lines. The show's message is to make the borderline invisible," says the curator **Leevi Haapala**.

MIMICRY AND MASQUERADE

The show features 20 cross-disciplinary artists and designers that have at least two things in common: visual wit and a conceptual mindset.

The international line-up of exhibitors includes the boundary-crossing Dutch artist Silvia B. and New York-based Sebastián Errázuriz, who has been described as "the court jester of the design world." Also featured are home-grown conceptualists Aamu Song & Johan Olin and creative duo Tommi Grönlund & Petteri Nisunen.

Each sculpture and installation takes part in a masquerade, posing as something other than itself or blending mischievously with its surroundings.

Finnish design classics are recycled with provocative irony. Kaisu Koivisto's sculpture "Reviiri" (Territory) encases Alvar Aalto's chairs in cattle-horn armour, and Maaria Wirkkala invites viewers to shoot down colourful glass bottles designed in the 1960s by her father, the famous sculptor and designer Tapio Wirkkala. How's that for iconoclasm?

UNEASY BEDFELLOWS

The architecture – designed by Helsinki-based Argentinian artist Florencia Colombo – is a compelling statement in itself.

"It is visually seductive, based on part-concealing, part-exposing grid structures and unexpected materials," reveals Haapala.

Returning to our original question, do sparks fly when art and design indulge in a mutual flirtation?

Absolutely – though it's a complicated love affair hidden behind a veil of many disguises.

"This is Kiasma's contribution to the Helsinki World Design Capital 2012 programme. We hope it will provoke discussion about the fluid boundaries between art and design," says Haapala. ●

Camouflage – Visual Art and Design in Disguise

June 15–October 7

WWW.KIASMA.FI

PARTY ON, HELSINKI!

THE 200-YEAR-OLD FINNISH CAPITAL GEARS UP FOR THE BIGGEST BASH OF THE YEAR.

YOU MIGHT NOT expect to stumble on a Mardi Gras at not-so-tropical latitudes, but anything is possible during Helsinki Week. What started in 1959 as a one-day celebration is now a 17-day fully fledged festival kicking off on June 1. Highlights include the XXII Samba Carnival and new events such as the Bassline urban music festival. See, hear and taste Helsinki in colourful happenings including the South Ostrobothnian Market in Senate Square, where you can sample traditional grub and dance open-air tango.

Be sure to join in the revelry on June 12, when the city celebrates its bicentenary. Helsinki Day will feature over 100 imaginative events from guerrilla gardening to wheelchair dancing. Or simply join the merry picnickers sprawled across city's parks and courtyards. Gate-crashers welcome.

WWW.HELKINKIVIIKKO.FI