

Kartell by Laufen on tour Prague, Designblok 7 - 13 October 2013

After the launch of the Kartell by Laufen bathroom project in Frankfurt (ISH) in March and participation in the Milan Furniture Fair in April, the two companies have scheduled a roadshow in the major international capitals to present their innovative bathroom project to the professionals of the sector, the public and the press. The itinerary of presentations will be run as part of the major trade fairs, initiatives and events associated with the world of design. The first two stages of the tour have been in Bratislava (Bratislavadesignweek) and London (DesignJunction). Next stop: Prague.

Prague, Designblok, 7-13 October - Kartell and Laufen will take part in Designblok 2013 to present the Kartell by Laufen bathroom project to the east market. The designer Roberto Palomba, together will talk and explain the concept behind the creation of this collection (designed by Ludovica+Roberto Palomba) during the Design talk the 9 of October at 11 o' clock. The other guests would be French designer - Matali Crasset and main of designers and representatives of companies for which thanks to the cooperation of both, created a unique and successful projects. The two companies will attend this Week of Design and Fashion, because of popularity and internationality of this festival that from 15 years populate the capital city of artists and designers who sign innovative projects both in industry and in the furniture sectors. A stage with 200 exhibitors and an enthusiastic public that last year reached 42,000 visitors. The philosophy of Designblok has not changed over the years: a careful and strict selection of original and quality works, signed by both emerging artists and successful designers. The theme of this fifteenth edition are the icons, those objects launched by Designblok that have become must. Some are still in production, other are collector's items, and still others are exposed in museums, but all are still much alive in terms of beauty and originality. Kartell by Laufen will presents a modern trend in the field of bathroom design at the Designblok Superstudio, where the best producers and schools will display their latest products. It will be located in Nákladové nádraží Žižkov (an old warehouse), which currently represents one of the most discussed buildings in Prague. Designed by Karel Caivas and Vladimír Weiss from 1931 to 1934, the unique functionalist building was incorporated into the list of national sights this year.

The new Kartell by Laufen bathroom is a complete and integrated project inspired by the iconic design of Kartell, combined with the quality of Laufen in the production of ceramics for the bathroom.

On one hand Kartell, Italian, creative, colourful, ironic. On the other Laufen, Swiss, rigorous, reliable. For 120 years, a dedicated commitment to making culture in the bathroom and innovation in the production of ceramic sanitaryware and continually investing in its strong selling points: Swissness, synthesis of research, quality and respect for the environment.

These two companies have a great deal in common, which is why they have chosen each other: an industrial approach to production, a vocation in research and technological innovation, an international market, a distribution numbering hundreds of points of purchase all over the world and a genuine passion for quality design.

From this union and with the interpretative project work of Ludovica+Roberto Palomba there comes about an unprecedented collection, which takes its place on the market as an aspirational project with great persuasive capacity. A liveable dream, with sophisticated yet affordable aesthetics, chic yet understated.

With design and total quality as its watchwords, the Kartell by Laufen bathroom takes shape as an integrated architecture, an interconnected ecosystem where washbasins, sanitaryware, taps and fittings, storage units, shower bases, bathtubs, lights and accessories coexist with the maximum flexibility as the watchwords, changing appearance like chameleons to meet transversal taste requirements; the glassy transparencies of latest-generation polycarbonate and the spare edges of the totemic floor-standing washbasin will attract those who love minimal, silvery, rarefied environments; the amber-coloured plastic, the round softness of the washbasin, the bathtub with overflow slot will seduce a public that is more inclined to decorate, to play, than ever. The rigid geometry of the ceramic items is tempered by the multicoloured lightness of the plastic elements.

The colour project is a project within a project. The palette of colours has been reinvented; leaving aside primary colours, it is the tones of the earth that emerge: the oranges of sand, steel blue, warm whites tending towards yellow and cold ones turning into blue.

For this free zone of the house where the senses yielded to the emotions, *Kartell by Laufen*, the bathroom that was not, was born.

The reasons for a project

Many common values and motivations that have prompted the two companies to share this project.

- Internationalism

The ambition that the *Kartell by Laufen* bathroom will become first choice when talking about the bathroom for the global market, where the two companies promoting the project are already extensively present, is the main target at which the project aims. Directed at professionals and architects from all over the world, its aesthetic flexibility and economic affordability make it particularly suited to satisfying the needs of a contract supplies market and becoming a suitable instrument for supplies in the public sphere, in hotel accommodation, in offices. In the same way these same qualities make it well suited to meeting the tastes of consumers of all latitudes. The new bathroom collection developed in synergy by the two brands will be distributed all over the world through the Laufen retail channels.

- Technological innovation

It is a shared project of great innovation, which has required more than three years to develop, the result of the constant research that is part of the DNA of the two companies. This has enabled Kartell to beautify the plastic materials to sight and touch and Laufen to revolutionise ceramics by making it a mutating material.

Introduced in the new *Kartell by Laufen* bathroom is the revolutionary *SaphirKeramik*, a material that allows performance characteristics that were unthinkable until today. A radius of curvature of the corners up to 1-2 millimetres (until now the maximum reached was 7-8 millimetres) for washbasins thin as blades, of an extreme lightness, not only visual but actual - *SaphirKeramik* is a material that, thanks to its increased durability, allows thinner walls and a simplified ceramic structure, which in turn translates into fewer materials, less weight and major benefits in terms of sustainability: fewer raw materials necessarily means lower consumption of energy in cooking, production and transport.

SaphirKeramik is an avant-garde material with unequalled mechanical resistance that cannot be scratched and withstands impact. What is more, it has all the benefits of ceramics: absolutely hygienic and resistant to the chemical agents of detergents and to abrasions.

- Industrial dimension

The *Kartell by Laufen* collection has been designed to be sold on a large scale, a dimension that must enable the huge resources spent on technological research, design, marketing and communication to be absorbed. High investment is needed for the moulds with which the products are created, and which are employed in the research.

- Design

The two companies share the idea of design understood as an industrial product capable of manufacturing articles that are stylistically consistent with the DNA of the companies but that are eclectic, that have come about from the creativity of different designers presenting different project approaches. A design that is nevertheless far removed from the "on and off" diktats of the styles and fashions of the moment. The decision to entrust the project to the best designers in the world and a natural aptitude to create trends by launching iconic products on the market is common to the paths of both companies.

- Sustainability and ethics

The two companies share the vision that it is the process and not only the product that must be sustainable. A *cradle-to-the-grave* approach that considers the total production impact. Respect for the environment, the recyclability of materials, the need not to waste either energy or water, to limit Co2 emissions during transport. They share the idea that the duration of a product is a value of sustainability that eschews a throwaway logic. A concrete response: the imperishable ceramics of Laufen, the indestructible plastic of Kartell. A virtuous circle that considers it ethical on the part of the industry and those who design to pose the problem of what happens both upstream and downstream of the product.

Quotes

“The bathroom is progressively and predominantly becoming the refuge of people’s domestic imaginations, now they are seeking wellbeing accompanied by a design that is functional and poetic at the same time. In this project you breathe the whole aroma of the inspiring identity of Kartell, which is immediately recognizable in its aesthetic expression. I am, therefore, enthusiastic about taking on a new challenge and launching this important industrial project with Laufen. There are many similarities that unite our two DNAs, which have allowed the realization of a collection capable of expressing the whole essence of emotional Italian design combined with the precision of the Swiss tradition”.

Claudio Luti, Kartell President

“Kartell by Laufen is a concrete project that responds to an industrial logic. High design products created to be distributed over five continents. An exceptional partnership with Kartell. We could have made furnishing accessories exploiting the expressive capacities of plastic with other partners. But we wanted the best”.

Alberto Magrans, Senior Managing Director Laufen

“An architectural project, which speaks a new language. Innovative, rich in emotion, transparency and colour. The Kartell by Laufen Bathroom is the synthesis of the work we have done in recent years in the world of the bathroom and represents an important step forward in this sector”.

Ludovica+Roberto Palomba, designer



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