

# Room for freedom

MORE

If poetry is an expression of feelings and ideas under a structured rhythm, Bernhard Müller is a poet whose verses are the pieces that he synchronizes within a certain space he defines as *Room for freedom*. "It is one of our basic principles. I'm not just thinking about an individual table or chair that we are elevating to a certain design level, but rather about a world that you would want to live in", explains Bernhard.

The German designer began composing his 'personal poems' during his adolescence: "I was interested in art and design back in secondary school. I went to the library, to the art association, to exhibitions, to the Bauhaus with my parents. I discovered people like Donald Judd, with his minimalism and landscape art. Russian avant-garde designers fascinated me as well, with their sometimes absurd steel structures. Then, my sister needed a bed, so I designed and produced it—I was 17! It was made of steel and produced at a metalworking shop near our house in the Münsterland region. There was someone at the shop who showed me a lot of the skills of the trade. When I moved to Braunschweig to study architecture, I built a floating bed in the room. Of course, that wasn't allowed. That's how I moved towards furniture".

MORE, the brand that Bernhard runs from Hamburg, is now celebrating its 30th anniversary. The road traveled since the creation of the first piece, "a very clean table in solid wood", has not always been easy, although, from the way Bernhard describes the beginning, it might seem so: "While I was completing my degree, a friend asked me if I could build him a bed. He had an idea, which I scribbled down and welded. I took a picture and took it to a furniture store. They said: 'That's great. Can we order it?' The furniture



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company ordered 60 of them. Three weeks later, we had our next order. I was 22, and I was so excited. That was the end of my degree program, and the start of my first company. After three and a half years, we went our separate ways and I set off for Hamburg to start over with MORE. That was in 1993."

Since then, not only the way of 'living' design has evolved, but also the clients and the way of interacting with them: "The client is much smarter than he was years ago because he has access to all information and the amount of money needed to produce this information is much higher. I myself know how important our website is to provide that information but I much prefer the analog basis. That is why there will always be a MORE catalog, because I appreciate this format so much, and our customers like it as well."

Bernhard's desire to continue designing remains intact thanks, in part, to the fact that he doesn't need to go too far to find inspiration: "Sometimes, it helps me to just chop some wood or walk the same route, for instance to walk my dogs along the Elbe." One of Bernhard's recurring ideas is located, precisely, outside: "I've wanted to move into outdoor furniture for quite some time. We are currently testing different woods. Once we are ready, we will use these for our first outdoor objects." The firm is in its sweetest moment, with several collections on the market, new ones to present and a clear objective for the future: following the path of building spaces that exude freedom with wood as its most significant material—in Bernhard's sober but warm use of language, as "the combination of clean pure lines and material with a little poetry." ○

