

The bold and the beautiful

Design fairs are back! [Katrina Burroughs](#) on the Salone del Mobile and looking to London

A great big *bentornato* to Salone del Mobile. Milan Design Week, the most innovative, exuberant and daring design circus in the interiors calendar has skipped two Aprils, and its return, this month, was dazzling. And timely. Maria Porro, the trade fair's new president, said: "With the pandemic we rediscovered [the importance of] a good chair, when you need to not only sit and eat, but you need to work on it and you need to let your children study. We rediscovered the importance of the quality of our living places."

Called Supersalone, perhaps to mark the superhuman effort it took to pull together, the fair was necessarily a low-key event. This year's mini version featured 423 brands in four halls, with just 16 per cent from "abroad". The fair organisers took the opportunity of a neater, nimbler event to innovate. So the chipboard used in the sets was made from 100 per cent recycled timber. None of the stands was painted and no

glue used, so they can be disassembled and re-used. Acknowledging the challenges faced by emerging designers, Anniina Koivu curated *The Lost Graduation Show*, featuring 170 projects from 48 design schools, a highlight of which was Papiilio, by Tobias Trübenacher, a demand-dependent street light with integrated wind rotor for power, that addresses light pollution and energy consumption.

There were new ideas, ranging from the brilliant to the bizarre. Shown in the Alcova District, Robust Nest, an incubator by the Swiss architect Fabien Roy created to function through power cuts in hospitals in sub-Saharan Africa, fell into the former category. An installation called *Hysteria* was a project on the role of women, where creatives produced their interpretation of the theme "each starting with a specific sex toy".

Some Milan stalwarts played to their historic strengths. In *I'll Be Your Mirror*, sisters Gwendolyn and Guillane Kerschbaumer of Atelier Areti collaborated with Elisa Ossino Studio



Looking towards London's fair

September 18-26 London Design Festival is a citywide celebration of design, with showroom events and a spectacular installation at the V&A. Ten design districts include a new zone on the Greenwich peninsula, with Design London as its centrepiece. [londondesignfestival.com](#)

September 19-24 Best for interior designers and serious home improvers, at Focus/21 the big brands present their new collections in 120 showrooms at Design Centre Chelsea Harbour. [dch.co.uk/focus](#)

September 22-25 Design London, good for the latest launches. Cutting-edge brands from across the globe congregate at this new interiors event, in a purpose-built exhibition centre. [designlondon.co.uk](#)

September 23-26 Introducing *Green Grads*, a show for emerging eco-designers. At King's Cross, *Planted* is the first show aiming to reconnect design with nature. [planted-cities.co.uk](#)

October 10-13 Best for contemporary craft. Back at Olympia, Decorex brings together launches from many of the leading UK brands, and features *Future Heritage*, the craft show curated by Corinne Julius. [decorex.com](#)



Left: In the 'bat cave' basement of her Via Sant'Andrea store, JJ Martin, founder of La DoubleJ sits on the new Gala sofa, by Cristina Celestino for Saba. Below: Etel Design hosted 'Prisma: Colori', a show featuring their collection of reissued 20th-century Brazilian furniture classics

and File Under Pop to deliver a show devoted to their most beautiful lighting to date: pieces launched since 2009, displayed in a set of rooms in the dominant Design Week palette of deep burgundy, turquoise and ochre.

Dimore Gallery's three shows this year were called *Past Present Future*. *Past and Future* were a sublime summary of Emiliano Salci and Britt Moran's favourite mix of periods and design movements, including Sixties and Seventies lamps by Claudio Salocchi and the spectacular backdrop of De Gournay's hand-painted Chinoiserie wallpapers. *Present* was a preview of the latest collection from Dimoremilano, their furniture, lighting and fabric label.

In this particular year, though, reprises, however welcome, felt insufficient. Travellers had made the pilgrimage to discover how design could make our post-pandemic lives better. *La Casa Fluida*, curated by Elisa Ossino Studio, illustrated the concept of the 360-degree home, the connected and comfortable living space of the future that will support domesticity, work and wellness.

But the big idea this year was joy. Adam Nathaniel Furman was on form with his hand-painted cast-porcelain tiles, a collaboration with Botteganove. Dior Maison gave us tableware patterned with swallows, clematis, peonies and dahlias by Cordelia de Castellane. In the La DoubleJ store the new Housewives homework collection was a stand-out launch. "We are really a joy factory," said the label's founder JJ Martin. "I'm not doing anything lofty here, I'm not changing the face of furniture. I'm literally showering your house with something joyful."

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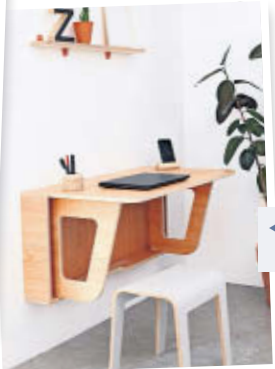
Desks



▲ The Nord desk includes shelving for plants or books above the tabletop; £499, [marksandspencer.com](#)



▲ Lommarp writing desk, £150, [ikea.com](#)



◀ Leaf desk; £400, [lozidesigns.com](#)



▲ Lista desk, £299, [furniturevilla.co.uk](#)



▲ The Tamholt is a one-drawer desk that doubles as a dressing table; £75, [jysk.co.uk](#)

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