

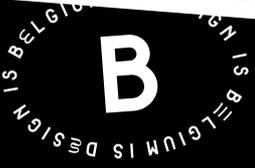
2020 2021



2019 2018



2016 2017

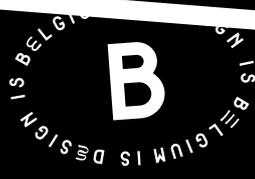


YEARS 10 YEARS

2015 2014

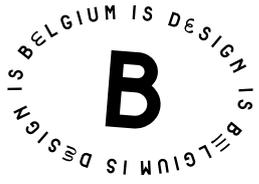


2012 2013

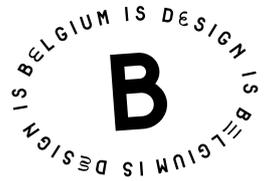


2011 2010





# A BIT OF HISTORY



The roots of **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** trace to Milan. Since it was launched in 1961, the Salone Internazionale del Mobile (Milan Furniture Fair) has grown from a traditional fair with stands, vendors and buyers to the most important design event in the world. In the early 1980s, industrialists launched an off-site event in Zona Tortona on the fringes of the fair; this started in a few studios, then expanded throughout the district and, later, the entire city. In 1990, Interni magazine published the first guide to all of these events and the legendary Fuorisalone was officially born. Designers were showcased like celebrities here, during professional – but, more importantly, festive! – events. Milan Design Week is no longer reserved for professionals; everybody wants to take part.

In 2006, initiatives led by Belgian institutions that promote design made their début during Milan Design Week. Designed in Brussels, an organisation that pre-dated MAD – Home of Creators, launched its *101% Designed in Brussels* programme, which it used to support five up-and-coming designers each year by participating in trade fairs in London, Paris, Stockholm, New York and Milan. That same year, Design Vlaanderen

(now known as Flanders DC) was featured in Zona Tortona, along with Optimo, Flanders Investment & Trade and TuttoBeNe (now known as Connecting the Dots), a Dutch initiative that aims to promote young talents from Belgium and the Netherlands.

In 2007, Design Vlaanderen launched ABC – Authentic Belgian Creativity, which showcases Belgian design via a selection of brands and designers from different disciplines. The recently established Wallonie-Bruxelles Design Mode (WBDM) agency organised its first group stand at Salone Satellite, the section of the furniture fair that is dedicated to designers under 35 years of age. At the same time, WBDM also exhibited in the Fuorisalone. This was curated by Giovanna Massoni, who would continue to be one of the key partners of **BELGIUM IS DESIGN**.

A collaboration between the different institutions was also established in 2007. Using the name [*les belges*], a shared communication was implemented to promote Belgian design during Milan Design Week. The name [*les belges*] quickly became known to the international professional audience.

2011  2011

# BELGIUM IS DESIGN IS BORN

2011 : **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** is born.

During the 2011 edition of Milan Design Week, Belgian design organisations decided to exhibit in a single location and communicate as one for the first time. They sought a new name for this project, one that was stronger and more impactful on the international stage. In the autumn of 2010, Design Vlaanderen had presented its 6th Design Triennial, which was entitled **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** at the Grand-Hornu museum (Mons – B). This brought together Lise Coirier as the curator, Stefan Schöning as the set designer and Raf Thienpont as the graphic designer.

**BELGIUM IS DESIGN**: a *statement* that unites all of the partners and which still holds true after ten years! Since then, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** has been revamped with a brand-new identity, which was created by the Brussels-based studio Kidnap Your Designer. This identity is firmly rooted in Belgian culture. It recalls the Alphabet font, a symbolic fusion of linguistic diversity that has been used on the country's road signs for a long time.

For the past ten years, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** has aimed to promote Belgian design around the world, with support from regional institutions that promote design: Flanders DC, MAD – Home of Creators and Wallonie-Bruxelles Design Mode.

**BELGIUM IS DESIGN** around the world  
**MILAN. PARIS AND BEYOND**

**BELGIUM IS DESIGN** aims to promote Belgian talent on the international stage and to connect them with professionals in the sector by participating in key events and organising B2B meet-ups.

Every year, Milan beats to the rhythm of design for five days. As a result, Fuorisalone offers no less than 400 exhibitions and events. In ten years, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** has organised eight exhibitions there and showcased more than 130 designers and companies by arranging high-quality exhibitions in prestigious settings.

‘In addition to the obvious media visibility, which helps to promote all of the individuals involved in Belgian design, this unmissable event is key to forging lasting links within the industry.

We also see it as an opportunity to highlight the ability of design and designers to foster significant change in the field of industrial production and its added value for other sectors’

explains Giorgia Morero (WBDM),  
the coordinator of the Belgium is Design project.



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# FUORISALON€

1 CONFRONTING THE MASTERS  
Accademia di Brera, 2015  
© J. Van Belle - WBI

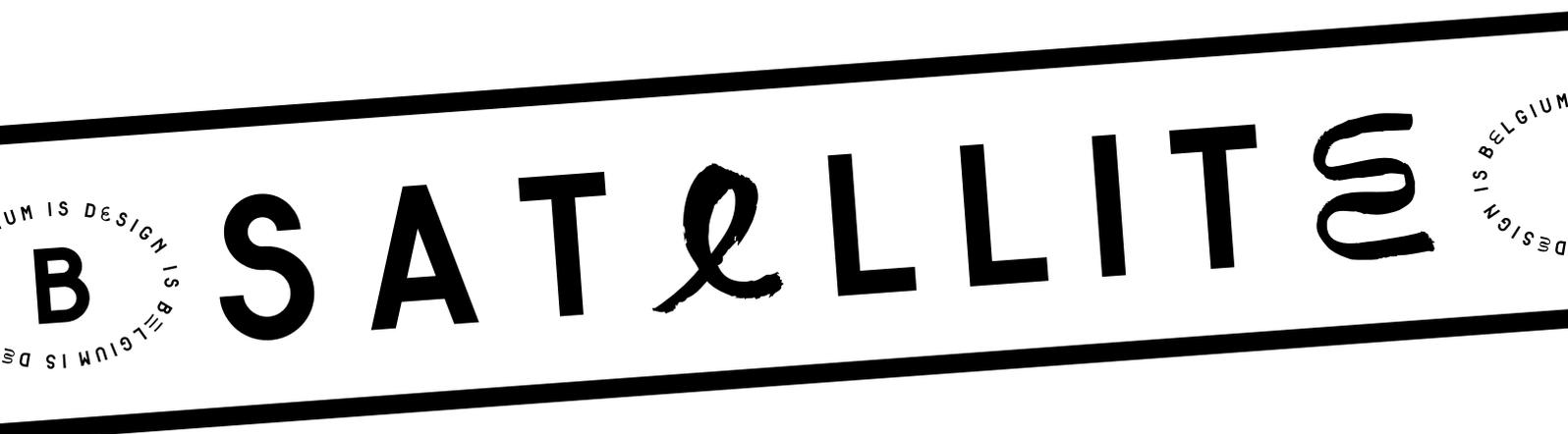
2 REFLECTIONS  
Triennale di Milano, 2014  
© G. Iacolutti

Since 2008, the next generation of Belgian design has been supported by institutions within the framework of the Salone Satellite, the Furniture Fair pavilion dedicated to up-and-coming designers under 35 years of age. In ten years, no fewer than 76 designers have been able to showcase their creativity through these group exhibitions.

**‘Belgium is Design was a springboard at the beginning of our work as designers. For us, it was important to be able to showcase our work at trade fairs and in the press, especially at the beginning, in order to reach any publishers who may have been interested.**

**We were able to present our work at the Salone Satellite in Milan for three years. This is something that would not have been possible for us on our own and allowed us to meet important people that we collaborated with’**

says PaulinePlusLuis, design studio.



‘The Salone Satellite acts as a springboard for a designer's international career. Designers like Xavier Lust, Elric Petit (Big Game), Danny Venlet, Damien Gernay and, more recently, PaulinePlusLuis and Pierre-Emmanuel Vandeputte, among others, had their breakthrough in the world of design with this fair’

explains Leslie Lombard,  
WBDM project manager.



B SAT@LLITE

Belgian design in Milan also encompasses more than one hundred designers and brands who exhibit during Design Week, at the Salone Internazionale del Mobile and in the Fuorisalone. We support them with an interactive map — the Belgian Design Map — that lists all of the exhibition venues. However, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** is not limited to Milan.

**‘Belgium is design, or how we can unite and show ourselves at our best at the Salone Del Mobile!**

**It is always a pleasure to participate, and a high-level platform to show your work to the outside world’**

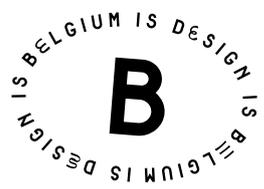
says Maarten de Ceulaer, designer.

**BELGIAN MAP**

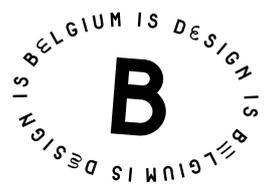
The year 2012 marked the beginning of an annual participation in the Maison&Objet trade fair in Paris.

‘Our group stands bring together around ten brands and designers for each edition in January. The goal is to support them in exploring this trade fair and the prospects of concrete commercial benefits’

notes Christian Oosterlinck, Flanders DC project manager.



**MAISON**



**& OBJET**



‘Participating in international trade fairs with Belgium is Design gave my brand important visibility. I was able to test my creations in comparison to other cultures and, at the same time, refine my export projects.

The first orders from overseas gave me the opportunity to consider how to solve certain logistical problems, but also to note the differences that exist in relationships with partners from foreign countries’

explains Jonas Willems  
of VONK.



**MAISON**



**& OBJET**



# COURTRAI STOCKHOLM NEW YORK

Other one-time appearances at international trade fairs and events have marked the progress of **BELGIUM IS DESIGN**.

In 2018, MAD – Home of Creators and Flanders DC had a stand at the **INTERIOR DESIGN BIENNIAL** in Courtrai.

In 2019, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** showcased eleven exhibitors at the **STOCKHOLM FURNITURE LIGHT FAIR** in the Greenhouse section, which is dedicated to young designers.

The same year, WBDM collaborated with Lidewij Edelkoort and Philip Fimmano to highlight textiles – an industry that has always been part of the fabric of Belgium – at the **NEW YORK TEXTILE MONTH FESTIVAL**. The ‘Textiles Revealed’ exhibition showcased the works of eleven textile designers in a gallery in Chelsea.

Every year, we organise a meeting between designers and international companies.

‘This is a unique opportunity for designers to present their work to companies in search of new products. Since we have been organising this, more than 50 companies have come to Belgium and several collaborations have emerged from these meetings’

as Dieter Van Den Storm,  
the new artistic director of MAD, explains.

‘For me, Belgium is Design is an opportunity that allowed me to start my career as a freelance designer, by offering me essential support. Without this, I do not think I would be where I am today’

says Pierre-Emmanuelle Vandeputte, designer.





# 2020

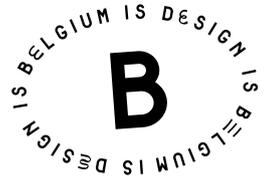


# 2021



# DIGITAL

# AND MORE €



2021: BELGIUM IS DESIGN  
goes digital and much more!

The uncertainty regarding the feasibility of large international trade fairs gave us the chance to explore a new format when talking about Belgian design, through the production of our very **FIRST FILM**. **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** has teamed up with French designer and film-maker Alexandre Humbert and Giovanna Massoni to produce a short film that gives an overview of Belgian design through nine objects. The goal is to present it at the **FUORISALON €** in Milan, as well as several design film festivals and other professional events, both through streaming and in person. The project will be unveiled in the coming weeks.

This year six up-and-coming designers who would have taken part in the **SALON € SATELLIT €**, will get their stage in September in the Opificio 31 in the Zona Tortona.

For **MAISON & OBJ €T**, the January 2021 edition took place entirely online, with a presence on **MOM**, the trade fair's B2B platform. The selection comprises around twenty interior design brands and a varied range of products.

Finally, **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** will have a new website by September, which will serve as a source of information regarding Belgium is Design's activities, as well as news about Belgian design.

## OUTLOOK

**BELGIUM IS DESIGN** has been synonymous with off-kilter quality and expertise for ten years. Each of the project partners firmly believes that Belgium has an important role to play in the design sector and that designers can help society, public authorities, institutions and companies to conceive and implement scenarios and solutions that make living together more harmonious. The current situation highlights the need to recontextualise new devices, while analysing existing organisational, material, logistical, medical or educational infrastructures. This is what designers do. This is the essence of design as a profession.

You will find detailed information about the partner institutions and the key moments of **BELGIUM IS DESIGN** on the following website: [www.belgiumisdesign.be](http://www.belgiumisdesign.be)

## PRÉSSE

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## GRAPHIC DESIGN

Kidnap Your Designer

AN INITIATIVE BY

*Wallonie  
Bruxelles  
Design  
Mode*



MAD, HOME OF  
CREATORS

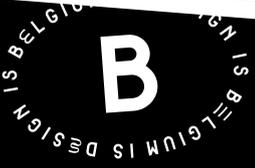
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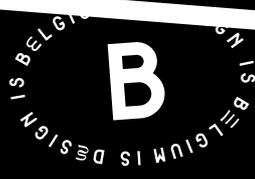


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