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www.dutchdesignpressdesk.nl

the dots

Connecting the Dots showcases all Dutch
presentations at the Milan Design Week 2015

#11 APRIL 2015 MILAN

JAN PUUYLAERT

Text Anna Bates • Photo Mariandrea Zambrano

What made you move to Italy?
25 years ago Milan was still known for design. Sottsass... Castiglioni – they were still working in the centre of town. You'd meet them in streets. I think it was curiosity; I wanted to see what Italians had that was so special.

What was that?
Everything that Holland lacked! Those days Holland was still very technical design-wise. It's only the last 10–15 years that this has changed. However I believe that also Holland became more artistic. Italians may seem artistic, but actually they are just very commercial. They know how to appear in an artistic way.

How do you navigate this balance?
I have my own small production company here. The fact that the economy isn't too well at the moment actually makes it a good climate to make low-cost products here. Lately I also listen more to what the market expects. I try to give them the best product I can, in the most artistic way, but I make products to sell rather than to show.

Who do you sell to?
A lot of hotels lately: they need a different kind of product. You get to study the product more carefully because it's repeated in many rooms – I work close with the architects to make things as perfect as possible. For a consumer on the other hand, I can design something but I will never know what kind of room it will be put into, or how it will fit in.

Standard (CE) thinking make things awkward...
It is an interesting European reality to think in CE standards, but in our global economy it loses its logic. Standard colors, sizes, typologies... as a designer it makes you feel stuck in pre-defined patterns. Last month I was working in Egypt, where people don't even buy products loose – they buy a whole room. Materials and styles are different – very baroque and decorated. We got more and more respect for their manufacturing capacities – they can still take a piece of marble and cut a whole wash-basin out of it. Over here the ability of creation is gone. It makes you think maybe we should let loose of our standards a bit.

• www.wet.co.it



