Sustainable Spirituality: Buro BÃ©len

Description

Solar Salon for Ornamenta 2024

Leading Amsterdam design studio Buro BÃ©len have been steadily building their reputation as innovators in interior and textile design since 2012, and their work can now be found in major museum collections around the world. Their approach is simple yet admirable: to create useful products based on ethical production with a richly tactile, sensorial, and even spiritual quality. They say, â??We believe that everything is interconnected. We wish to offer openness, and study how the transient nature of this interconnectedness brings new insights and aesthetic materialisations that are accessible to everyone.â•

Buro BÃ©len was founded in 2012 by Brecht Duijf and Lenneke Langenhuijsen, both of whom now act as mentors on the Geo-Design and Social Design Masters programme at Eindhovenâ??s Design Academy. At the heart of their approach was, and is, a desire to produce sustainable products that can have a truly beneficial impact on peopleâ??s lives. In order to live up to these claims, collaboration is at the heart of their research and practice; they have worked with some of the most forward-thinking designers and manufacturers to bring their ideas to life.

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Their progressive bio- textiles are among the teamâ??s most adventurous products. For example, the team produced their own version of Tapa, a traditional cloth made from sustainable wood fibres on the Pacific Islands, by combining it with naturally derived Mulberry silk to improve its flexibility for everyday use. Not only does the fabric support traditional crafts and sustainable methods for textile production, it also has naturally dehumidifying properties. In their Tapa wooden textile sofa cover, released in 2015, Buro BÃ©len suggest using their fabric to extend the life of a sofa, as well as improving the air quality of living space.

Also in 2015, Buro BÃ©len created a series of woven blankets entitled *Another Throw,* made from merino wool and yarn dyed using all-natural pigments. Instead of using chemicals to make the dyes adhere to the thread, they embraced the natural productâ??s uneven properties, which make each woven textile a unique, one-off piece.

Textile walls for Willibrorduskerk

Buro BÃ©len introduced another bold new fabric innovation in 2018, with a line of all natural textile-based sunscreens, which they suggest as an alternative to artificial sunscreen lotions and polyester sun shades. Named *SUN+*, the project range includes clothing, a tent, and a parasol. Remarkably, their fabric provides protection against harmful UVA rays, while still allowing through beneficial amounts of UVB rays that provide us with vitamin D. They said, â??Rethinking the physicality of sunscreen is key, as the sun is the source of our life.â?•

In 2021, Buro BÃ©len produced a monumental and visually striking laser cut curtain for the Dutch Pavilion at the Dubai World Expo 2021 using this unique fabric, with cut-out images of mangroves, oleanders, date palms and moringa, all indigenous to Dubai.

Panels from Buro BÃ©lenâ??s 2024 enterprise Fibre Wall Wool.

More recently, in 2024 Buro BÃ©len worked closely with global interior design company Kvadrat to create a line of sustainable and biodegradable building materials titled *Fibre Wall Wool*, which act as an alternative to petrochemical based products. Together they created an interior stucco with acoustic and insulating properties, made from a blend of dark grey and off-white wool derived from Kvadratâ??s waste stream. The end results are tactile and sensorial, giving interior spaces a luxurious, comforting warmth. As such they encapsulate the design companyâ??s ongoing desire to merge ethical production methods with aesthetic and spiritually sound properties. With work acquired by major museums including MoMA New York, and the Vitra Design Museum Basel, and commissions from the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam and the Atelier Luma Arles Textiellab Tilburg among others, we will no doubt be seeing much more of their groundbreaking work to come.

CATEGORY

1. TEXTILE DESIGN

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