

## Milan, mischer'traxler & The Young Talent Award

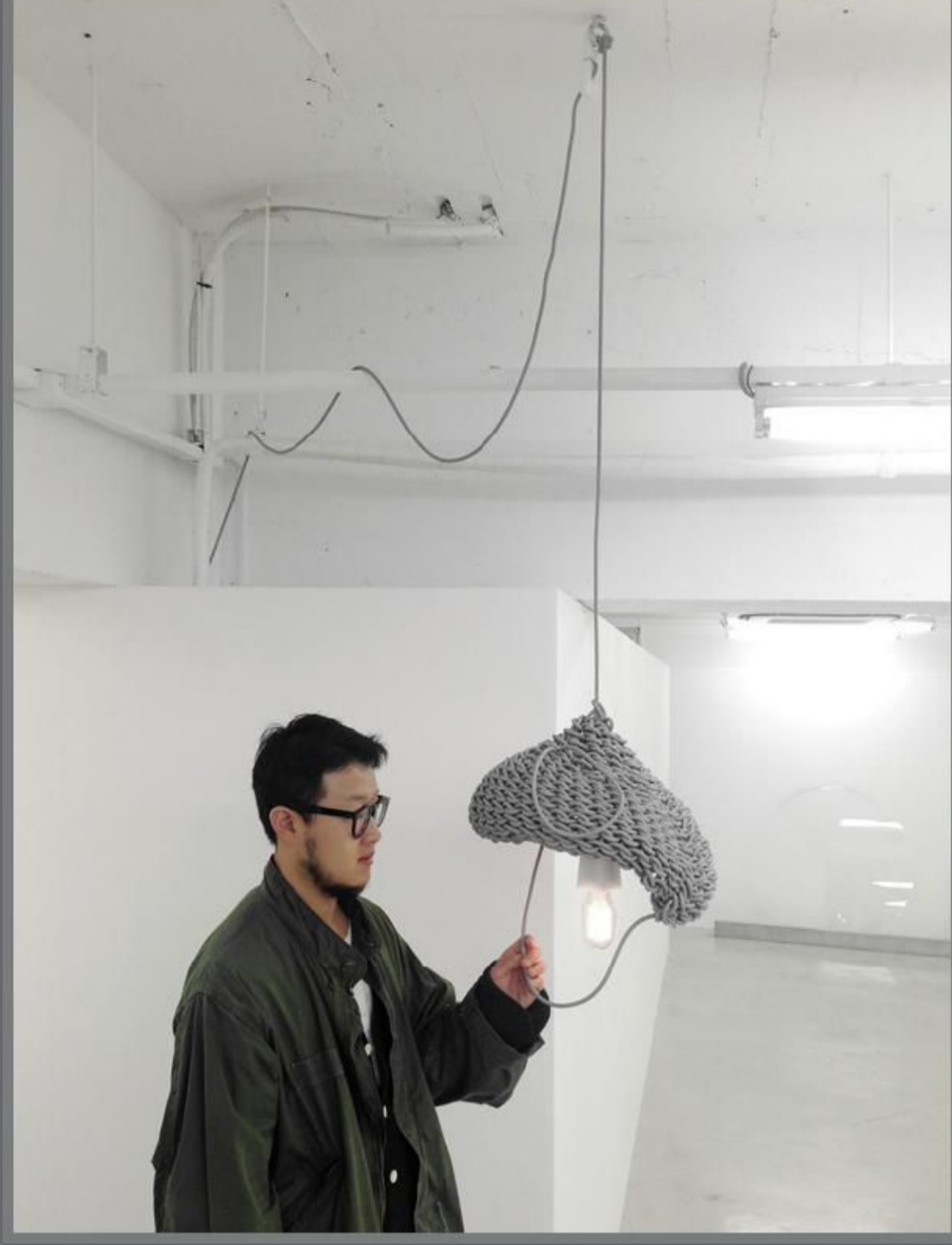
Posted on April 9, 2014 by Liz

The WAN and WIN editors-in-chief are at the fabulous Salone del Mobile in Milan this week, whizzing their way around hundreds of stalls and tweeting images of some of their favourite designs, at which the team are staring in pure admiration and awe. While they report live from the venue, I thought it would be interesting to focus on some lesser known designers also at the infamous design week, brought to our attention by BE OPEN.



*Benjamin Graindorge, France. Shortlisted.*

BE OPEN is a global initiative to foster creativity and innovation, a think tank whose mission is to promote people and ideas today to build solutions for tomorrow. It is a cultural and social initiative founded by the Russian philanthropist, businesswoman and entrepreneur Yelena Baturina, with the support of an amazing international team. It was in fact launched during Milan Design Week 2012, with the goal of becoming a bridge between the great minds of our time – philosophers, sociologists, designers, architects, artists, writers, businessmen and opinion leaders – and the promising new minds of the younger generation.



*Kwangho Lee, South Korea. Shortlisted.*

BE OPEN develops its works through exhibitions, events and panel discussions in the world's leading design capitals. Naturally, they decided to announce the first winner of their new annual prize, The Young Talent Award, at a packed awards ceremony at the start of this year's Milan Design Week. mischer'traxler was selected from a shortlist of ten candidates, from an original long list of thirty-seven, put forward by a leading international design industry jury. This jury was an all-star cast from the design world, including Giulio Cappellini, Art Director of Cappellini, Sofia Lagerkvist of design trio Front, and Jay Osgerby of Barber & Osgerby, who designed the Austrian duo's unique egg trophy prize, a symbol of nascent talent ready to hatch.



*Katharina Mischer and Thomas Traxler of Studio mischer'traxler, Austria. Winners of The Young Talent Award.*

The jury said of their selection: "The work of the ten shortlisted candidates is of exceptional quality, but we felt that mischer'traxler's methods best reflect the spirit of this new, important design prize. Matching experimental research and vanguard attitudes with industrial production, they clearly indicate how much further manufacturing can be developed from where it is now. Their talent for introducing creative interaction into everyday objects and humanising every aspect of design reflects their incredible ability to synthesise the future of design."

The criteria for this prize, and indeed the award itself, are unique: the selection is made on the basis of potential, rather than work achieved. As well as their trophy, mischer'traxler win €24,000 to support their living expenses for a year. This is so that they can continue to work at their own pace, without any obligation to create new products or exhibit their work. The Young Talent Award is, like BE OPEN, changing how people see the design world, providing an opportunity for learning, education and development that will spur on creativity and innovation.



*Dennis Parren, Netherlands. Winner of Yelena Baturina prize.*

There was also a second winner at the awards ceremony, with Dennis Parren selected as the Yelena Baturina prize-winner. His trophy, a replica dinosaur egg, was created especially by Front Design. Baturina herself chose Parren from the shortlist, due to her belief in his business potential. His design specifically 'tapped into a very important trend for our time' of people as 'global nomads'. Moreover, there will be a third prize known as the Web Choice award for another talented young designer – you have until 17 May to vote online for your favourite, so definitely get involved here!



*Elie Ahovi, France. Shortlisted.*

We're looking forward to hearing more inspirational stories like this when everyone gets back from Milan – be sure to check our news site for product exclusives next week!

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