


judith SENG

 Judith Seng knows that life can be messy—and that sometimes it's up to design to instill order.

But that's not really her style. "Most designers pretend that life is much neater than it actually is," muses the Berlin-based designer. You could say that for Seng, 33, objects are a negotiation between flaws and perfection whereby, say, glassblowers might transform undesirable air bubbles into decorative elements on drinking glasses—as in the collection she recently co-developed for the CIAV glass center in Meisenthal, France.

Sometimes that means creating the mess in the first place. The doors of her Hide & Show wardrobes are cut short to reveal the clothes inside, "so you reframe what seems untidy and emphasize it," she says. And her Rise table, bench, and stool—unveiled at the Post Design gallery during last April's Milan Furniture Fair—are coated in glossy raspberry lacquer that seemingly dissolves down into acid-treated legs, as if corroding in standing water. "I was interested in the aesthetics of decay," Seng explains.

Influenced by her studies at Berlin's University of the Arts—where the overarching goal was to expand the definition of design—Seng's portfolio is diverse. For the EQuality Design kiosk she co-organized at the 2003 Tendance fair in Frankfurt, visitors could browse objects made by disabled workers. She also does major research studies for companies like Trendburo and IDEO, while a two-year project she helped spearhead paired University of the Arts students with industry experts and Berlin-area workshops to create new products.

So is Seng a designer? A consultant? A pedagogue? Her oeuvre doesn't fit into a tidy box. But that's just how she likes it.

www.judithseng.de — ARIC CHEN



ALEX LALIK



opposite Seng with her Hide & Show wardrobe this page, from top Patches tables, which can be used singly or in combination; Rise stool and bench, previewed last year at Milan's Post Design gallery

LOCATION: Berlin / BEST-KNOWN PROJECT: Hide & Show wardrobes / BIGGEST CREATIVE INSPIRATION: Rethinking daily life

GOAL FOR THE YEAR 2020: Making plans for 2021 / TITLE OF IMAGINARY MONOGRAPH: In-Between

WOULD RATHER DIE THAN DESIGN: A war