

Work of art

Striking designs and ergonomics
come together in the latest furniture
for offices





The Interiors Group headquarters

Fit-out specialist The Interiors Group has been delivering stunning office environments for clients for over 20 years so, when it came to creating its own flagship headquarters in London, it needed a showpiece interior. It brought in architecture and interior design practice Scott Brownrigg – a specialist in office design – and its head designer Renata Sa as well as interior designer Pernille Stafford. The brief was to create a variety of dynamic spaces that would be memorable but functional, which also guided the choice of furniture.

Beyond the showcase reception, the Balderton Street offices have two meeting rooms, one themed as “funky” and one as “serious”. The funky meeting room has a

long Fritz Hansen glass table with Walter Knoll white leather back FK



chairs that bring a sense of class and sophistication. It is also home to the first use in the UK of a lit timber wall by Luminoso, which incorporates an infrared photograph originally shot of 1960s London. To achieve a more “serious” look, the second meeting room has been furnished with classic Oxford chairs by Fritz Hansen, a Methis ceramic-top meeting table and the Smithfield black light from Flos. Upstairs is the cellular offices and meeting rooms with open-plan bench desking, again by Methis, which caters for up to 45 people.

Methis, which uses the tagline of “Good work environments retain good workers”, is part of the continuing innovation in office furniture that combines cutting-edge design with functionality. The new Faveo task and occasional seating range from Ki, designed by Paul Brooks, is not only comfortable but has also been awarded a Red Dot Design Award. The mesh back of the Faveo task chair provides ergonomic comfort through its “point synchromatic integrated mechanism” that allows for a wide range of reclining options with free flow ▼



Faveo from Ki

▲ and four position locking. The seat height and tension can be adjusted with easy touch controls on one side and the forward tilt and recline lock with controls on the other side. The range comprises stackable four-leg and cantilever frame chairs and swivel chairs with five star bases plus a wide range of finishes and options including arms, frame finish, transparent and sculptured mesh castors and glides. The transparent and sculptured mesh back rests also come in a choice of colours.

A contemporary and organic piece of furniture for offices is SleepBox which is made up of a reclining seat at one end and a semi-enclosed alcove at the other containing a leather-covered mattress. It has a solid, smooth and uniform shell made of the robust surface material Hi-Macs. Unveiled in January at the Swissbau show in Switzerland, it was designed by Caspar Lohner at the Chair for Computer Aided

Architectural Design in ETH Zürich university's department of architecture, supervised by researchers Matthias Bernhard and Manuel Kretzer and produced in collaboration with Hi-Macs distributor Kläusler Acrylstein.

Designer office furniture for working at home is available from Fashion4home, such as the Klemmbrett Desk by German-based designer Manuel Welsky. This piece – which is named for the German word for “clipboard” – clips into its supports with a stainless-steel belt that wraps around the desk holding the wood in place and forming the legs. Also from Fashion4home is the Shipwood Dark Desk, created by New Zealand furniture designer Logan Komorowski for the LDK brand. It combines and contrasts beautiful reclaimed dark-stained wood and a single polished



Klemmbrett

stainless-steel foot. It is part of the Shipwood collection which uses antique pieces of recycled ship wood from trade boats used on the Pearl, Li, Yangtze and Huang rivers in southern China. It features Logan's signature design giving a contoured effect as light refracts between the wood slats.

New office furniture designs are to be unveiled at The Office Exhibition, the Middle East's premier trade event for office fit-outs, at the Dubai World Trade Centre from May 15 to 17. The exhibitors will include British manufacturers such as Loft, JDD and Bisley as well as Canada's Global Group and Allseating and Middle East-based Mobili Emirates Furniture, United Furniture and Ritmo Furniture with its Doimo Office range. Loft, which is the exclusive manufacturer of furniture by celebrated 20th-century British designer Robin Day, will introduce some of the most iconic seating designs for large-scale applications. In collaboration with its United Arab Emirates distributor Human Space, Loft will bring back the classic 1973 Polo chair which has remained a popular choice due to its bright colour palette, strong exterior and easy-to-clean surface.



SleepBox



▲ JDD is launching three thoughtfully designed seating ranges: Polly offers relaxed seating for casual brainstorming or breakout sessions while the Norah and Georgia ranges are individual seating suited to quiet reflection. Japanese design house and manufacturer Okamura will showcase Luce, a multipurpose ergonomic chair designed for active work settings where users are required to stand up frequently. Its “smart relaxation” mechanism quickly absorbs the impact of sitting and helps the body to ease into a relaxed posture.

The Office Exhibition will also present German manufacturer C+P’s new range of acoustic and wireless office solutions. Combining creativity and functionality, its Sonic Wall range of workstation partitions are sound-absorbing surfaces that can be printed with individual motifs to make the office space look aesthetically pleasing. C+P’s Monotop partition system can be controlled

using a tablet or smartphone, while the Cegano and Premio desk systems are fitted with wireless charging modules to ensure smartphone devices remain fully powered.

Separately from The Office Exhibition, a sound absorption concept has also been launched by Kinnarps. Called Oktav, the boards – which are light and easily mounted onto walls – have been designed by Christian Halleröd. Available in a variety of harmonious coloured fabrics, they can be arranged in interesting patterns and colours around the office to create a dynamic interior, Christian says. “Sound greatly affects our ability to perform,” he explains. “Disturbing noise does not just mean stress, headaches and difficulty to concentrate, but can also lead to problems such as shoulder and neck pain. When I designed Oktav, I wanted to create an attractive, environmentally friendly product which creates harmony in the workplace.”

For more on The Office Exhibition 2012, visit www.theofficeexhibition.com.

