

the midsummer session[©]

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The Midsummer Session is a unique interview format designed by Dante – Goods and Bads to foster creativity, reflection, and connection among our designers. This initiative gathered our talented team for a short, yet profoundly enriching period in our headquarters deep in the Bavarian Forest.

During the Midsummer Session, designers stepped away from their usual routines to explore the tension between two contrasting worlds: structured work and creative freedom. On one side, we created a custom-built, enclosed space – the „claustrophobic triangle“ – where designers had to fully engage with the questions posed, fostering deep focus and introspection. On the other, we balanced this with walks through nature, allowing thoughts to flow freely and conversations to unfold organically.

The result was not only a series of deep and revealing interviews, exploring designers' relationships with objects and the meanings they might hold for others, but also a stunning collection of photographs – capturing their interactions not just with their creations, but with the natural world that surrounds and inspires them.

The questions posed during these sessions drew inspiration from a variety of profound sources. They echo the introspective nature of Max Frisch's „Fragebogen“, the whimsical wisdom of fortune cookie sayings, the raw honesty of „Confession of Depression“ by Langreuter/Schmidbauer, the existential inquiry of „Will Happiness Find You?“ by Fischli/Weiss, and the contemplative silence found in Heinrich Böll's „Murke's Collected Silences“. These diverse influences shaped our conversations, encouraging our designers to ponder deeply and share openly.



My name is Christophe de la Fontaine. I'm an industrial designer, co-owner, and co-founder of Dante – Goods and Bads. What's important to me? Professionally speaking, I feel incredibly lucky to do the work I love every day. Designing isn't just about creating products; it's about reflecting, asking questions, and solving problems. Through our work, we bring creations into the world that reflect our perspective, striving to do things in a better or more thoughtful way than before. That's the beauty of what we do.

Please tell us more about your company?

Dante Goods and Bads is still after all these years an experiment for Aylin and me. A certain luxury that we allow ourselves in order to realise our visions by trying to push the conceptual and physical boundaries and redefine them for ourselves.

This means that our approach is not commercially driven but with the premise of offering a state-of-the-art product that nevertheless fulfils all criteria and is not intended to be an attempt in itself.

Beyond any creativity, it needs a fulfilment for its typology, a reason behind its construction, an alignment with the manufacturing mode and a thought throughout the whole process. In the end it's about credibility.

Do you have any special rituals that help you achieve your creative goals?

Absolutely. Prioritization. Without it, it's impossible to navigate the complexities of life and work, especially since starting this venture with Aylin. Time is the most precious resource, and dedicating focused time to delve deeply into a project is essential. Canceling distractions and honing in on what truly matters allows the creative process to unfold.

How do you know when a project is finished?

Honestly, deadlines often dictate when a project is done. However, at Dante, we've embraced the idea of revisiting and evolving products over time. A piece we thought was complete might have a second, third, or even fourth life. We don't just change the color or finish; sometimes, we reimagine the product entirely within a new context.

What sort of lasting impression do you hope your work will leave on others?

I think that's a difficult question, because that would intend that you have, an overall meaning in your products, which I don't think we have. I can only hope that people are feeling happy with our products for quite some time.

Do you have a strong relationship to objects?

Absolutely. As a designer, I have a deep connection to the physical world. Objects are integral to my profession and, I'd even say, an obsession. They're not just tools or decorations; they carry meaning and emotion, shaping how we experience our surroundings.

If you could become one of your objects, which one would you choose?

I'd choose the Darling. It's a small, occasional table made of ceramic. Its simplicity is its charm. Ceramic allows for reproducibility, yet each piece retains a sense of individuality. The table has no mechanics or moving parts;

Do you feel protected by objects? If so, which ones?

I'd say clothes. Every day, we open our wardrobes and choose what fits best for the moment. Clothes have a powerful impact on how we feel and present ourselves, offering protection. They're deeply personal and empowering.

Is there an object that symbolizes freedom for you?

A car or a bicycle. Both represent motion and the ability to move through time and space on my terms. There's a sense of liberation in being able to speed up.

How much property do you need to feel secure about the future? Or does fear tend to grow with the amount you own?

The more you have, the more afraid you are of losing it.

There will be an end. Are you okay with that?

Definitely.

Thank you so much.

Thank you for having me.







Thank you. I'm Christian Haas. I'm a product designer based in Porto, where I run a small studio. We're a tight-knit team of four, and together we design across a broad spectrum: furniture, lighting fixtures, porcelain, tableware – essentially objects for living. Our projects and collaborations are international, with a particular emphasis on working with Japanese and German companies.

What drives my work is the desire to create timeless objects. I strive for designs that not only endure in quality but also resonate aesthetically, carrying meaning for the people who use them. I hope that the care and thought I pour into my designs foster a lasting connection, allowing them to become cherished parts of someone's life.

Do you remember when you first realized you were creative?

Honestly, it took some time for me to see myself as a creative person. I grew up in the Bavarian countryside, in a fairly pragmatic environment. Creativity wasn't something that ran in my family, and I didn't feel inherently artistic. It wasn't until high school, when I started taking art classes, that something clicked. Those classes awakened a curiosity in me – an appreciation for form and aesthetics...

Does creativity occur in cycles?

For me, creativity comes more in waves. My workdays are structured from 9 to 6, and creativity often has to coexist with organization and problem-solving. However, there are these bursts – these moments when I'm fully immersed in generating ideas or finding new concepts. It feels like they sprout up unpredictably, like mushrooms after rain.

I live for those moments. They're like fuel, and a single creative day can sustain me for weeks. It's not a constant flow, but I've learned to embrace and nurture those bursts when they come.

Do you have any special rituals that you do in order to achieve your creative goals?

Not rituals, per se, but I do have a tendency to overthink things. In my downtime, I'm constantly mulling over ideas, revisiting and revising them in my mind. My team often teases me for changing my opinion about concepts mid-process. In a way, the „ritual“ is this ongoing dialogue I have with myself – an internal back-and-forth that refines the design. It's messy, but it works.

„Try again. Fail again. Fail better“, as the saying goes?

Exactly. Creativity is never a straight path, and failure is part of the journey. Sometimes it feels like you're chasing a fleeting idea, but when you finally capture it, the satisfaction is unmatched.

What sort of lasting impression do you hope your work would have of people?

I want my designs to feel soulful – objects that people connect with on a personal level. My hope is that they become more than just functional items; they should feel like companions, enriching daily life and standing

If you could embody one of your creations, which would it be and why?

I think I'd choose the rope lights I designed 13 years ago. They were born from a completely free, experimental project, and they've taken on a life of their own. They're in galleries worldwide and have accompanied me on so many journeys. If I could embody those lights, I'd capture their essence of fluidity, variation, and adaptability, always traveling, always present, yet light and effortless. Plus, they have this universal charm, everyone loves them.

Do you see beauty in things that others might not notice?

Absolutely. When I visit places like Tokyo, I'm drawn to the less obvious: residential areas, overlooked corners, mismatched details in architecture. There's beauty in the raw and imperfect – textures, colors, and shapes that tell their own story. It's not the iconic shrines or temples that captivate me, but the everyday poetry of the mundane.

Can you remember from what age you have taken it for granted that something belongs to you, or does not belong to you?

Growing up as the youngest of five brothers, the concept of ownership was almost non-existent! But I remember getting my first bike from my god-mother – it was a revelation. That was mine!

What could you easily live without?

All the communication devices – smartphones, laptops, you name it. I'm not deeply attached to them. My life would remain rich with human connection, conversation, and shared experiences. I'd still host dinners, meet friends, and enjoy life – just with fewer notifications.

What do you only endure with humor?

In this industry, you have to laugh at the number of unrealized projects. So many promises, so many ideas that never make it past the drawing board. It can be disheartening, but humor helps you stay resilient and keep moving forward.

What inspired your „Pinstripe“ series for Dante?

The idea was simplicity itself: a lightweight design that felt spontaneous. It began with a square sheet of paper folded intuitively twice, creating table-tops that feel both strong and delicate. The end result is a robust yet graphic statement – a balance of fragility and structure.

Can you feel colors?

Yes, definitely. Colors carry an energy that resonates emotionally. They're alive in their own way.

Is material living?

Yes, in a sense. It interacts with us, transforms over time, and holds stories.

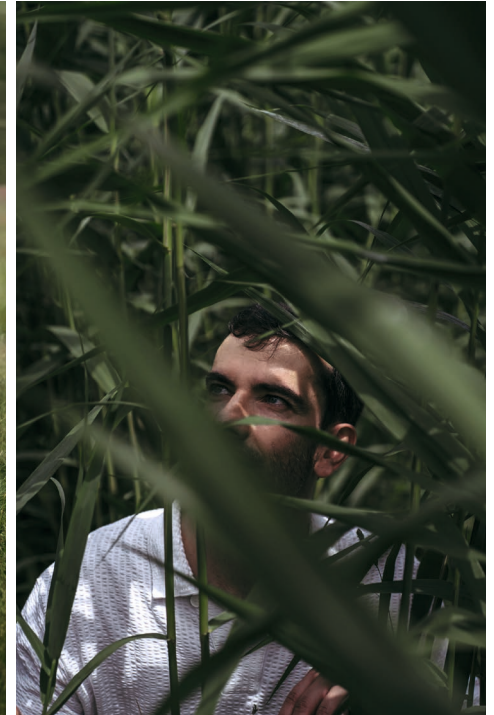
Will happiness find you?

It already has, I'd say.

Thank you, Christian.

Thank you – it's been a pleasure.





Welcome to the Midsummer Session.

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us what Aro Studio represents for you?

AS I'm Andrea Steidl – a designer and the founder of Aro Studio alongside my partner, Raquel Pacchini. Aro Studio isn't just a business; it's our Life Project. It's our way of expressing ourselves, of daring to experiment, and ultimately, that's why we're here today.

Do you find it hard to rely on someone else?

AS Not at all. In fact, collaborating is where the magic happens. Our partnership at our Studio is built on trust and mutual inspiration.

RP Absolutely. Collaboration is a dialogue – a conversation that takes your ideas to a whole new level.

Do you often second guess yourself?

AS Always. Second-guessing is an intrinsic part of the creative process.

Does creativity occur in cycles?

RP I don't think creativity is cyclical. It's not a switch you flip on and off. It's the very way you perceive the world – the lens through which you find solutions and see possibilities. It's a state of mind, something that's always with you if you let it be.

Do you have any special rituals that you do in order to achieve your creative goals?

AS For me, it's about escaping the usual context. Stepping away from the everyday environment allows me to see things in a new light.

RP And for me, rest is essential. Sometimes the best way to spark creativity is to simply pause and let your mind breathe.

How do you know when a project is finished?

AS I'm rarely one to say, „Okay, that's perfect.“ Every object has its own story – some long, some short – but I know a project is complete when I feel a sense of perfect ease. During prototyping, I intentionally step away from the work. When I return and find that calm clarity, I know it's balanced. To me, balance signifies the end of the design process.

What sort of lasting impression do you hope your work will have on other people?

RP I hope it sparks curiosity, and that it inspires a genuine affection for the story behind the object.

Could you please say something about the products you designed for Dante – Goods and Bads?

AS The side table Revue was one of the first objects I ever designed on my own. I faced a challenge: I wanted an object that was visually appealing – decorative in its own right – while also serving a hidden function, like a niche or pocket for your belongings. Blending beauty with functionality was important for me.

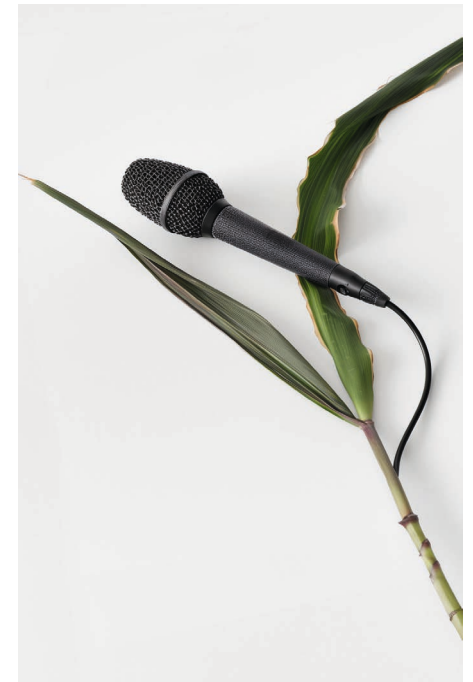
What draws you both to Dante – Goods and Bads? How do you connect with Aylin and Christophe?

AS For me, it's all about personal relationships. That personal connection is incredibly important.

RP Dante, for me is a creative playground – a place that merges a variety of ideas.

AS It's also very experimental. That experimental spirit gives us the freedom to be challenged and to evolve continuously.

Thank you so much. Let's play.







Welcome to the Midsummer Session.

Could you please introduce yourself and tell us what's important to you, both as a person and as a designer?

My name is Shane Schneck. I'm currently based in Stockholm, though I was born in the United States. What's important to me is creating original expressions that feel both meaningful and useful to people. When I design an object, its utility is paramount – it needs to function as an intuitive tool that enhances daily life.

You designed a project for Dante called the Easel. What were your intentions when you began?

I set out to explore a new way of sitting. We delved into historical typologies, like stargazing chairs and primitive stools found in cultures worldwide. My aim was to blend those influences into a new form of chair – one that reimagines the act of sitting while paying homage to its ancient roots.

The result, the Easel, reflects those ideas. It's a contemporary piece, yet it carries echoes of something timeless and essential. Its presence is minimal, almost understated, which can make its comfort surprising. People often don't equate its small size with how satisfying it is to use. I hope the Easel speaks for itself as a product, inviting people to think about sitting in a new way.

How do you know when a project is finished?

A project is finished when we've said enough without saying too much. It's about striking a balance where the object can stand on its own and communicate its purpose intuitively. At that point, it's ready to live independently in the world.

Can you recall the age when you first understood the concept of possession – what belongs to you versus what doesn't?

I think it was quite early, maybe around 9 or 10 years old. That's when I began to grasp the boundaries of ownership.

How much property do you need in order not to be afraid of the future? Or do you find that fear tends to increase with the amount of property?

Fear definitely increases with the amount of property. I'd prefer to own less, honestly. There's a sense of freedom in having only what you truly need.

Is there a sum that could outweigh your possessions?

Absolutely. The sum of love, the sum of friendship, the sum of clean air and clean water – those things are far more valuable than material possessions.

If you could become one of your objects, which one would you choose?

I'd choose the Easel. It represents an essential object that's highly functional, nomadic, and stripped down to the essence of sitting. It's an object I'm deeply connected to.

What is your connection to Dante – Goods and Bads?

My connection with Dante is rooted in a long-standing friendship. Christophe and I met 16 years ago in Milan while working in Piero Lissoni's studio. Though he was there for only a short time, we quickly formed a

bond and have stayed friends ever since. That's what makes this collaboration special – it's built on a foundation of friendship.

How do you perceive Dante – Goods and Bads as a company?

I see Dante as embodying an eclectic and alternative vision of the world. Through its material choices and forms, it reimagines how we perceive everyday products.

Dante consistently presents objects that challenge typologies in joyful and unexpected ways. To me, this company represents a fresh and distinctive voice in an industry often marked by uniformity.

Shane, thank you so much for sharing your thoughts.

Thank you for having me. It's been a pleasure.





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Welcome, and thank you for joining us today. To begin, could you tell us a bit about yourself?

Thank you for having me. I'm Calen Knauf, an industrial designer based in Vancouver. I have a small office in Chinatown where I work on a variety of projects. My work spans across many domains – essentially, anything I'm asked to design. I haven't yet designed everything. But, you know, one day...

What drew you to Dante – Goods and Bads?

Honestly, it was the contrast. There's something intriguing about the branding – the gothic, black-letter style of the logo paired with these sleek, contemporary products. It's unexpected, a kind of beautiful mismatch. The logo especially caught my eye; it's not the type of aesthetic you'd typically associate with modern industrial design.

And then, when I visited the website and saw the counter showing how many cigarettes had been smoked since I loaded the page, I thought, „These guys are onto something different, something cool.“ It sealed the deal for me. I wanted to be part of something so distinctively offbeat and yet deeply intentional.

What inspires your creative process? Where do you find your ideas?

Nature, undoubtedly. Walking through the natural world is a constant source of inspiration for me. Everything we've ever created – every tool, every piece of furniture – originates from our observations of the natural world. Rocks, rivers, trees, animals – they all inform the foundational principles of design, even if indirectly.

I also find that the best ideas come when I'm not actively seeking them. Living my life, exploring interests outside of design, and staying present are what allow ideas to flow naturally. Creativity, for me, is strongest when it's unforced.

Do you think creativity occurs in cycles?

I hope not! So far, I haven't experienced a dry spell. I'll knock on wood to keep it that way. For me, creativity has been a consistent wellspring, and I'm grateful for that. I try to cultivate a lifestyle that supports this constant flow – staying curious, staying active, and not overthinking it.

How do you know when a project is finished?

The truth? They're never really finished. There's always room to tweak, refine, or push a concept further. That said, there's a point where continuing stops adding value. For me, that's where instinct and reason come into play. It's about striking a balance – asking, „Does the benefit of more effort outweigh the cost of leaving it as is?“ Once I reach a point where further changes feel excessive, that's when I stop. It's more of an intuitive call than a quantifiable one.

Tell us about the products you contributed to Dante – Goods and Bads.

I worked on two tables: the Sponge Table and the Vent Table. The Sponge Table has a playful tension in its design. While the basic structure – two

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panels and a circle – isn't groundbreaking, extending the panel beyond the circle adds a deliberate awkwardness that feels fresh. I'd been carrying that shape in my mind for a while, and when I came across this carbonated foamed aluminum, I knew it was the perfect material to bring the idea to life.

The Vent Table came together quickly – one of those projects where everything just clicks. Sometimes, when you add the final piece, there's a moment of clarity, and you know it's ready to go. That's what happened with the Vent Table. It was such a strong vision that we were ready to move straight from the model to production.

Do you believe objects say something about their owner?

Absolutely. Just like clothing, objects are a way of telling a story about who you are. You can't explain yourself to everyone you pass on the street, but your clothes can give them a glimpse of your personality. Objects are kind of clothes for your home. They're offering visitors a sense of your taste, your values, or even your quirks. Whether consciously or not, the things we surround ourselves with tell a narrative about us.

When is humor most important to you?

Always. Humor is such a vital coping mechanism, especially in tough situations. If something bad happens, but you can laugh about it, it takes the sting away. Humor lightens the load and helps you navigate life's inevitable challenges. It's a constant companion for me – a way to turn setbacks into something manageable.

Do you hope people will be singing songs about you 100 years from now?

Hell yeah, who wouldn't? I'd love that.

Thank you so much for your time and insights.

It's been a pleasure.





Yes, of course. The main idea was to bring all our designers together for two days to build a strong sense of team spirit – surrounded by nature yet still focused on their work.

On one hand, we developed an interview format set within what we called the „claustrophobic triangle“, a custom-built, triangular space where designers couldn't simply walk away from the questions we posed; they had to remain engaged.

On the other hand, we took walks through the surrounding Bavarian landscape. The result was a series of photographs capturing the designers' interactions not only with the products they created for us but also with nature – the very source of inspiration for both designers and artists. In a sense, it was where two worlds collided: the structured work environment and the liberating space that only nature can provide.

You're simultaneously an artist and a co-founder of a design company. Do you feel that you approach running Dante the way you approach your art, or do you adopt a different mindset?

For me, it's more of a seamless blend than a strict shift in mindset. Art has always been my main focus, and what I do for our Design company is a natural extension of that. Both disciplines are about creating experiences and objects that speak to people, whether they are displayed in a gallery or used in everyday life. I don't see it as a contradiction – one influences the other.

For Dante I focus on storytelling and art direction – developing narratives around each product, shaping the brand's visual language, and ensuring our designers' ideas shine through.

I've followed your artistic journey for quite some time, and it often revolves around everyday objects. Can you talk about how objects inspire your work?

I am fascinated by the unnoticed things that surround us – things that we take for granted. In my work, I often try to show that objects have a life of their own. They grow, they strive and they want to be perceived beyond their mere function.

Interestingly, the creative process behind my art often parallels that of product design. I regularly collaborate with specialists who help transform my ideas into reality – whether by fabricating a piece or offering technical expertise. In both art and design, I'm captivated by the continuous cycle of ideation, refinement, and realization.

Where do you draw inspiration from? Are there recurring themes in your work?

A lot of my inspiration comes from everyday observations. I also return to certain themes – like music and antennas – that deal with signals, transmissions, and the broader concept of communication. Another recurring interest is the intersection of nature and technology, and how they simultaneously clash and coexist.

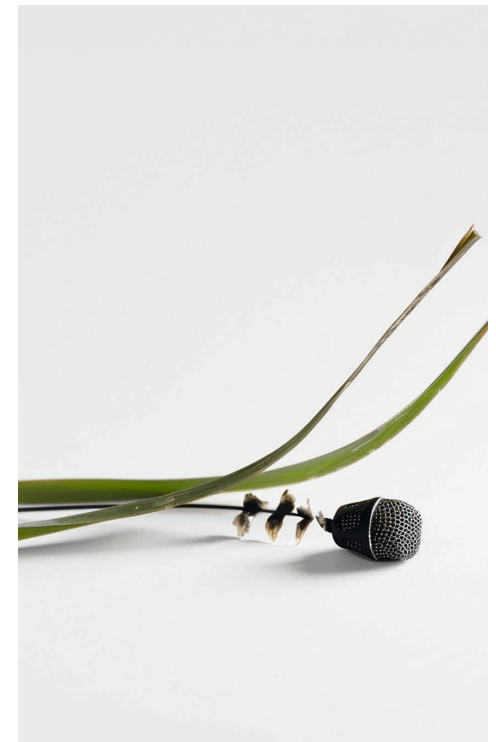
I see teaching as an opportunity to nurture a creative mindset. We guide students toward discovering their personal voice, rather than prescribing a fixed set of rules. It's incredibly rewarding to watch them grow, refine their methods, and gain confidence in the unique perspectives they bring to their work.

Let's talk about Dante – Goods and Bads. Could you describe the product you contributed to the collection?

I love sitting on the floor while watching TV, but I never had the perfect cushion for it. Once the idea struck me, it seemed so obvious – how had I not created one sooner? The design for La Push is delightfully simple, inspired by the alpha lock key on an old computer keyboard. The indentation, originally meant for fingers, now forms a welcoming seating surface that invites you to relax and stay grounded. It's straightforward, cozy, and I believe others will appreciate it just as much as I do.

Thank you for sharing your perspective.

Thank you, my pleasure.







Welcome to the midsummer session! Thank you for joining us.

Could you start by introducing yourself and telling us what's important to you, both as a person and as a designer?

My name is Stefan Diez. I'm a designer, and I'm currently based between Munich and Bassano del Grappa in Veneto. I also teach industrial design at the Angewandte in Vienna. For me, being a designer means having a keen focus on the beauty of industrial design, but it goes far beyond mere aesthetics.

I'm fascinated by the long arc of a project, which often unfolds over months – or even years. This extended timescale allows for deep thinking, iteration, and reflection. I also love that design is a deeply social endeavor; it's all about communication and observation. You have to translate what you see in the world – how people live and interact – into objects, experiences, and solutions. In many ways, that process mirrors life itself: it's constantly evolving and full of discoveries.

You mentioned teaching in Vienna. How do you approach teaching design?

What matters most to you as an educator?

Teaching, for me, is now as much about learning as it is about instructing. We're at a very interesting moment in history, where we realize just how little we know about the future. That uncertainty creates a unique dynamic in the classroom.

Each time we take on a project with students, I become one of them – learning alongside them. My role isn't to tell them exactly how to do things but to guide them through an experience. I help set a focus or a theme, and then I encourage them to find their own methods. I don't prescribe any single approach, nor do I impose ideas about beauty or aesthetics. Instead, I emphasize consistency and coherence: *Consistency* in how you develop your concept, *Coherence* in the story you tell around it and *the ability to present and argue for your project* convincingly.

It could end up being a physical object, a piece of software, or even something as intangible as a sensory experience. The key is whether students can articulate why they made specific choices and how those choices form a cohesive whole.

We'd love to hear also about the product you designed for Dante – Goods and Bads. Can you walk us through it?

Sure. The piece I created is called Falstaff. It's essentially a lounge chair, and I'd say it's the most comfortable one I've designed far. I conceived it as a sort of three-dimensional hammock that allows you to nestle in from multiple angles.

When you sit in it, it feels like a nest – cozy, enveloping, and supportive. You can lounge in a variety of positions, which encourages a relaxed, almost playful approach to seating. In a sense, Falstaff is emblematic of my studio's broader philosophy: we try to strip away the unnecessary, focusing instead on core elements that provide comfort, function, and a touch

of poetic simplicity. It was also one of my earliest explorations into seating design.

What is your personal connection to Dante – Goods and Bads?

My relationship with Dante – Goods and Bads goes back many years; we're actually old friends. That kind of long-standing friendship can be a blessing, but it also comes with risks. People sometimes warn you against mixing friendship and business, because it's easy to „mess it up“, as they say. But for us, that foundation of trust and shared history has been a real advantage.

There's a unique level of comfort and honesty we bring to the table. We can communicate openly, push boundaries, and truly experiment. If things get challenging, we rely on that mutual respect to see us through. I think that's why we've managed to succeed with projects like Falstaff. And yes, I'd do it all again in a heartbeat – risk included!

Your perspective on both design and teaching is really intriguing. Is there anything else you'd like to add before we wrap up?

I'd emphasize that design is not just about making beautiful things – it's about responding to the world around you. It's a mirror to society and can serve as a driver for social and cultural change. As designers, we're always juggling creativity, practicality, and empathy.

I see teaching as part of that same continuum: we explore possibilities, question assumptions, and learn from each other. It's a reciprocal process that keeps the discipline vibrant. And at the end of the day, whether I'm teaching or working on a chair, it's about creating meaningful experiences – ones that can make life a bit more comfortable, more thoughtful, and more engaging.

Thank you so much, Stefan. It's been a pleasure talking with you.

Likewise! Thank you for having me.





Hi, we are Haus Otto, a design studio based in Stuttgart. I'm Patrick, and this is Nils. We work in the fields of furniture design, object design, and spatial design. For us, it's not just about creating the product or object itself but also considering the context around it. We focus on how something is produced, what happens to it after its lifecycle, and even how humor can be part of the process. A lighthearted approach is essential to our design philosophy, blending playfulness with thoughtful craftsmanship.

How did „Haus Otto“ come to be?

The studio started in Nils' grandfather's attic, which was part of an old factory. We renovated the space, and it became our first office. The house belonged to his grandfather, whose name was Otto, so the name „Haus Otto“ felt like a fitting tribute. From those humble beginnings, our journey unfolded quite organically. That early stage gave us the freedom to explore a variety of projects without being confined to one specific focus. It's always been about following our interests and creating a diverse range of work.

Can you describe the products you designed for Dante?

We created two objects for Dante. The first is called Hold On, a wall-mounted object that actually started as a coincidence. It's made from the cut-off pieces of a recycled foam block. During production, we realized these leftover pieces had an intriguing aesthetic. Instead of discarding them as waste, we turned them into a new object. Hold On is playful yet functional. It can serve as a shelf, a stacking platform, or even just as a sculptural art piece on the wall. We loved how it turned something overlooked into something purposeful and fun.

The second object is the AL13 Lounge Chair. The idea was to design a piece made from a single material, without needing adhesives or mixed materials. We used aluminum for its durability and versatility, making the chair suitable for both indoor and outdoor use. The AL13 Lounge Chair adapts to different scenarios – whether it's relaxing, working, or having coffee. Its design incorporates two small table surfaces, providing functionality alongside comfort. The simplicity of the material and its adaptability to various contexts were key elements in its creation.

What drew you to collaborate with Dante?

As a young studio, we found Dante to be a very interesting brand. It's not just about producing furniture – there's a deeper narrative and a sense of artistry behind everything they do. The juxtaposition of „Goods and Bads“ in their concept intrigued us. It's not often you come across a brand willing to explore the unconventional or experimental, and that creative freedom resonated with us. Working with Dante allowed us to push boundaries, try daring ideas, and create objects that aren't just functional but also have a poetic or conceptual layer. For a studio like ours, where experimentation is vital, this collaboration felt like a perfect fit.

Thank you. It's been a pleasure.







Welcome to the Midsummer Session.

Who you are and what is important to you?

My name is Jakub Zak. I'm a designer based in London, but my work takes me between Italy and North America quite frequently. My work is rooted in a desire to create meaningful, expressive objects that not only function well but also resonate with people on a personal level.

What's important to me? Honestly, it's about enjoying life – taking the time to appreciate the small moments, whether it's savoring a morning coffee or getting lost in a good book before bed. Those little things keep me grounded and grateful.

Can you describe your creative process?

My creative process thrives on travel. Being in new places, observing how people live, and understanding the ways they interact with objects is incredibly inspiring. Even the same tool or design can be used differently based on someone's culture or geography. Travel opens my mind to new perspectives and ideas. It's a huge driver of my inspiration and creativity.

Do you see beauty in things that others might overlook?

Oh, definitely. I think most designers do – it's part of the job to be obsessed with the details. I'll get fixated on something as small as a hinge or a specific curve, and my non-designer friends often laugh at me for it. But those tiny elements often hold a surprising amount of beauty and intention.

Do you have a strong relationship with objects? Are they self-created or found?

Both. I love finding unique, meaningful pieces, but I also enjoy creating things myself when I have the time. Whether it's something I've made or something I've stumbled across, I have a strong connection to the physical world and the stories objects carry.

Can you describe your product for Dante and your intentions behind it?

Memoir, the coat rack I designed for Dante, was born out of necessity. I needed a coat rack that was versatile and functional for my own use. The design took inspiration from trellis-like structures – the kind you can open and close to change their shape. By deconstructing that idea and adding hangers, the coat rack became not just functional but also visually striking. Its graphic quality allows the user to reconfigure it and create compositions, almost like notes on sheet music, making it both practical and artistic.

If you could become one of your objects, which one would you choose and why?

That's a good question. I'm not sure I'd want to be a hanger, too much weight to carry! I think I'd choose something comforting and functional, something that brings ease to people's lives.

Do you feel protected by objects? And if so, which ones?

I'd say anything soft. Comfort is such an important concept for me – both in life and in design. Objects that bring comfort, whether it's a plush chair or a cozy blanket, provide a sense of protection and well-being. I love the idea that we can design comfort in the home and in our lives.

Which things do you need more of?

In general? Ice cream!

What is your connection to Dante – Goods and Bads?

We're like brothers from different mothers. I remember the very first show in Milan – it was literally in a garage. You opened the doors and showcased your vision, and it was inspiring to see you launch yourselves so boldly. Over the years, it's been amazing to watch Dante grow, evolving into a company known for its poetic, narrative-driven products. Every piece you create has a story, a unique characteristic, or a quality that elevates it beyond just being a chair or a mirror. There's a depth and beauty in your work that isn't superficial but deeply intentional.

Thank you so much.

My pleasure.





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