



SALONE  
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## SURPRISINGLY SUSTAINABLE

**It wasn't until I was writing about the designs that we are exhibiting in Milan that I realised everything we show there is inspired by the idea of 'not throwing anything away'. Not throwing away can be achieved by using production remnants and sometimes even remnants from products made of production remnants. You can breathe new life into material that has been gathering dust in the attic, or use 100% of a plank sawn from a tree (wood that had in any case become unusable), or use old windows from demolished buildings. In short, we do what we've always done, without it having been an explicit goal. I only became aware of this once we had taken a good look at everything.**

More important than the way in which we practise the art of not discarding things and of reusing material, is something that is possibly the least noticeable: we build on knowledge and skills from the past. Not throwing things away is usually related to recycling or not writing off material. Much more significant, though, is the fact that by living in a modern society, in which products are made or services delivered in varying combinations and at short notice, which by definition goes together with fleeting contacts and interrupted processes, we see a great deal of our efforts going up in smoke.

For us, nothing has been lost, because virtually everything that we have ever undertaken, thought up, learned, made or bought was for us, and every investment, in whatever area, has the chance to mature and to yield something when the time is right. The Scrap Wood Cabinet, devised in 1989, is still in the collection and every year we sell dozens of them. As for the Oak Display Case – first made in 1993 and put into production again around 2000 – we make more of them every year. The way in which the found glass was fixed during construction of this display case caused us to think just as long about a similar case made of steel. It wasn't until now, 20 years later, that the time finally came. The solution was so childishly simple that you're tempted to ask yourself why so much time had to go by before solving the problem.

The products that we present this year have thus been created with the baggage of 20 years of working and fitting things into our tradition of not throwing anything away – whether material or knowledge or energy. It's a tradition that has delivered a series of products that you could classify as classics or icons.



## WINDOW CABINET

**In 1996 we exhibited a series of 28 cabinets made with windows and doors in the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Since then we have carried out countless commissions in which windows and doors served as the starting point. But we have never taken the cabinet around the window itself as the starting point. Now a unique object has been created, which can be mass produced. Assembling the cabinets next to each other and piling them up offers the chance to create unique installations.**

The design is not only an elaboration of what one could almost call a window and door tradition, it's also the result of a series of steel display cases that we have been making since 1993. The apparent lack of detail in the way in which the wooden window frames are set in completely transparent steel frames

turns out, on closer examination, to be a carefully worked-out construction of frame, profiles, glazing beads and shelf supports. Without the display cases that we had made previously and the experience that we gained in creating them, we would not have been able to make these cabinets.

One of the most interesting aspects of the window and door cabinets was that the window or the door was the inspiration for the cabinet. The inspiration thus became part of the cabinet. This meant that the design process was literally made clear in each object and the overall concept required no explanation. Once again, the story is a simple one: The window determines the size of the volume and the way in which the volumes are combined determines the object. It's as simple as that. The limits and the possibilities are clear but each object is unique.





PIET HEIN EEK.



steel old window display cabinet



## NEVER THROW ANYTHING AWAY

It appears to be an innocent design, the new Tree Trunk Table and Chair. But it's the result of a determination not to throw anything away. Taking the material as it is, doing as little as possible to it and assigning it a major role in the final product is virtually always the starting point for my designs. It only came to me later that this principle had been carried to extremes with these designs. The two planks of the table top have the size and shape they had when they arrived from the sawmill. The split that remains open in the heart of the table top is, from a practical point of view, actually no problem at all. With the chairs, this actually makes it possible to place the wooden parts at the right angle, thus creating the desired seating comfort. The back legs of the chairs can only be made using wooden pieces that are bent in the right way – wood that normally can't be used at all for traditional, pragmatic, straight designs done on a drawing table or computer. Just as, in the past, the ribs of a boat or rafters of a roof were made from selected trees, we have to select the wood for the legs. This means that the chairs cannot just be made in any quantity and whenever you want.

## NEW TREE TRUNK TABLE





NEW TREE TRUNK CHAIR



PIET HEIN EEK ◦



**new tree trunk chair waxed**



**new tree trunk chair white finish**



new tree trunk chair natural

## NEW TREE TRUNK CHAIR



waxed



natural



white finish



high model white finish



high model waxed

## WASTE WASTE 40X40

The waste project came into existence more than ten years ago as a reaction to the annoyance of having to throw away material because it was too expensive to do anything with it. Not because it was worthless but because labour costs so much. The game of turning daily reality around and pretending that labour is free and materials are worth their weight in gold resulted in products that are, in theory, unsalable (because labour is not at all free) but in practice, the products turned out to be saleable after all. As opposed to almost any other product, the waste products are made with the patience of a saint, quite a feat considering this is an age in which time is a rare commodity for pretty much everyone.

However this process, too, leaves waste material behind, in smaller amounts, and more difficult to use than our 'usual' waste material. This 'waste from waste' motivated us to take it a step further. In an effort to bridle the process to some extent, and keeping in line with the metal waste products, I came up with the idea of employing a fixed size of 40 mm x 40 mm. This size, combined with the decision to use the materials solely as an outer skin instead of stacking them, particularly defines the appearance of the products. Straight-edged shapes are formed which are always a multiple of 40 mm, and round is therefore not round.

Just as with the beam and tube furniture, the objects are numbered consecutively, and no two pieces will be identical.



3890-30 Waste-Waste 40x40 upholstered armchair



3890-29 Waste-Waste 40x40 upholstered bench



3890-28 Waste-Waste 40x40 conference table



3890-31 Waste-Waste 40x40 coffee cube



3890-32 Waste-Waste 40x40 coffee cube



## WASTE WASTE 40X40 SERIES

unique pieces



3890-00 sculpture



3890-01 bench



3890-02 bench



3890-03 bench



3890-04, 05 armchairs



3890-06 side table



3890-07 round table



3890-08, 09, 10 armchairs and side table



3890-11 chair



3890-14 round table





3890-15, 16 armchairs



3890-17 3 sculptures



3890-18 table



3890-20,21 table and armchair



3890-22, 23 armchairs



3890-24 armchair colored



3890-25 armchair custom size

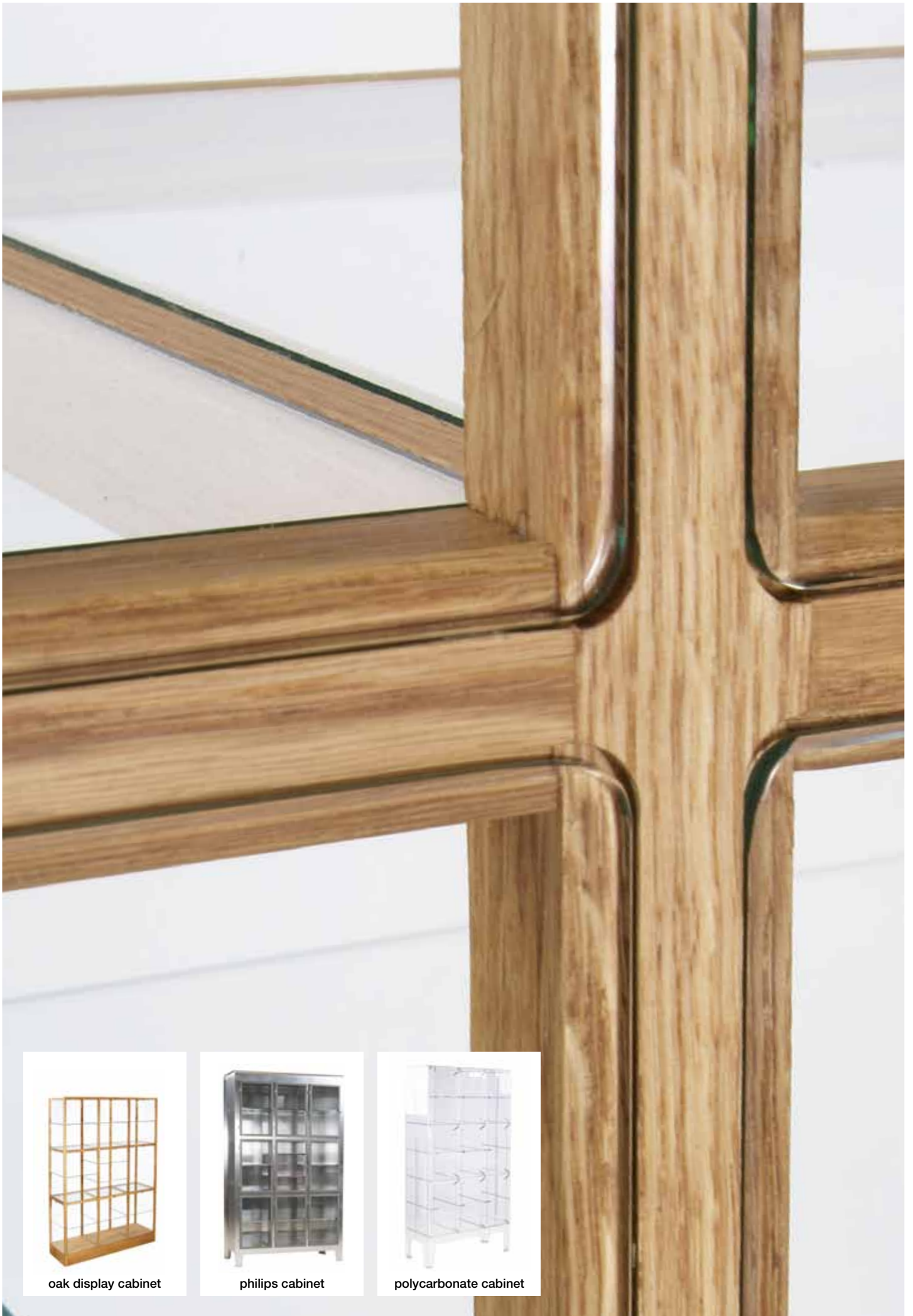


3890-26 side table

## FINALLY!

In 1993, inspired by a large consignment of square glass plates, we constructed the Oak Display Case. Shelves, sides, top and front were all made in identical fashion with glass plates of the same size. Later, the dimensions of the case were adjusted to match those of the 'Philipskast' and a polycarbonate version was also made. However, we never succeeded in making a steel version. The structure, with its horizontal and vertical parts, turned out to be too complicated to construct out of steel.

For the Gerd Rohling exhibition in our gallery, display cases needed to be made. It was possible to carry out his design wish very nicely using the system that I had already had in mind for years, without vertical and horizontal muntins. With a very finely detailed glass load-bearing system, the display case is not only easier to construct but also much more attractive. Finally, we can make a steel version of the Oak Display Case based on the same idea. Because steel is very different from oak, the whole appearance of the case is also completely different.



oak display cabinet



philips cabinet



polycarbonate cabinet

STEEL DISPLAY CASE



PIET HEIN EEK ◦



steel display case 162 x 100 x 62 cm

## SILVER DISH

Each year the Nederlands Zilvermuseum (Dutch Silver Museum) in Schoonhoven offers artists and designers the opportunity to create an item in silver, via the Stichting Stokroos (Stokroos Foundation) grant. This year I had the chance to do this and for me the logic was: if you're allowed to do something you don't normally do, then it's fun. This logic is only logical if your job or motivation is to create something new rather than mastering a skill and refining it, which applies to most jobs. Ultimately doing something for the first time becomes routine.

My design was not a product but a little machine, which you can use to produce a link, which can then be made into bracelets and necklaces. I had already been sitting on a design for a wide bracelet for a while, and this task was the perfect opportunity to do something with it. The design was duly received, but the assessment committee's opinion was that they had not asked me to make a piece of jewellery. It had to be an item for everyday use; suitable for interiors. I have to admit that I was somewhat piqued, and actually I lost all enthusiasm for the project.

The deadline was quickly approaching and I 'still' had to produce a design. Which couldn't be too complicated because it had to be made very quickly. I thought, still a little crossly, that if it didn't really have to be beautiful but only suitable for interiors, perhaps I still had something to offer. The production method for the stamp vase which we once designed for Noord Brabant province, where the tension between the number of items made and the budget led to a very specific production process and design, would perhaps offer a solution for this project too. At the time, the number of items we wanted to produce was too great to make the vases one by one, but the budget was too small to pay for an expensive mould.

Normally a deep drawing mould like this is rather expensive because you want to have a product that matches the design exactly, and because the product must be identical each time. But when you only make an inferior mould and accept that you won't obtain identical products from it, this kind of mould is not at all expensive. And deep drawing can also be done using a simple garage press, so in terms of machines it all worked out well. At the time it was a nice story for the vases, the flowers also looked pretty in them, but the story was still more appealing than the product. The dish for the Zilvermuseum (Silver Museum) would have a broader base which highlights the process even better and of course it's much prettier in silver. We started with a number of different sheet sizes, mould shapes and diameters. The dishes were already a lot nicer than the vases, but the story was still better than the product. Then we had the idea of placing the sheet on the punching machine to perforate the edges. Not only did this turn out to be an essential addition, but the anticipation of placing a sheet of silver on this rough machine was also really great. We did some tests first in copper, because this material is the most similar to silver in terms of tensile strength.

Then came the key moment: we placed the sheet of solid silver on the punching machine, a few euros were stamped out of it with each blow, and if the stamp got stuck we would have a sheet of scrap silver (this would happen later on with the first brass dish). Next the perforated sheet was placed on the garage press and pushed into the mould. This could also have gone wrong, we already had examples of ugly crumpled up bases. But in the end it all worked out. The dish came out from under the machines like a gem. So it was still a piece of jewellery.

For mere mortals, we have now included an aluminium, and a copper and brass version in the collection.



PIET HEIN EEK



brass dish



aluminium dish



copper dish



inox dish

## CRISIS 2013 CABINET

I thought up the first products in the Crisis range in 2002, irritated as I was by all the complaining about the crisis. “Do you know what?” I thought, “Let’s cut up a sheet of cheap plywood on the milling machine, throw in a few nuts and bolts, and sell that as a do-it-yourself kit, nice and cheap, to all those who were so hard hit by the crisis.” Ultimately, no-one wanted to put a chair together themselves. And if anyone did want to do it, it had little to do with the crisis, and more to do with it being nice to have some manual work to do. In the meantime, we have discovered that we sell quite a lot of the crisis products if they are assembled and sprayed in a single colour. The funny thing is that it seems as though sales increase any time the word ‘crisis’ crops up frequently in the media.

There was a resurgence of complaining about the decline in the standard of living in 2009, and in the same year, the Crisis 2009 Series was created. We had long realised that although the computer-driven milling machine can do everything itself, an old-fashioned (but modern) circular saw is actually faster; so away with that modernity and an even cheaper chair. It doesn’t have to be able to be dismantled, since nobody’s interested in that. The Crisis 2009 Series was born, consisting of a chair and table which are slightly less expensive because they required fewer hours of labour. Despite the legitimacy of the idea of arriving at a more attractive price and increased sales by going for simplicity, this series turned out to be much less appealing. Good to know that cheap is not the only way to go.

Now, after years of crisis, decline, complaining and misery, in which we applied and perfected the crisis working method, the Crisis 2013 Cabinet has arrived. A cabinet made entirely of that cheap sheeting material. From the very beginning this material has proved to be the only attractive material suited to this work. Even the hinges and fittings are made of it. The word ‘crisis’ appears twelve times in this text not by way of complaint, but rather to show how inspiring the times are in which we live.





crisis 2013 2 door cupboard, gray finish



boys 1 door cabinet  
62 x 124 x 60



boys 2 door cupboard  
122 x 124 x 60



4 door sideboard  
244 x 124 x 60

## MILLED OAK BOWLS

As with a great number of other products in the collection, irritation over the creation of worthless waste material while making one product formed the inspiration for a new product (or design?). The blocks of wood are glued together, levelled on one side and worked on the milling machine using moulds. This is waste processed on a high-quality machine, which provides maximum added value.

Since 2002, when we bought the first computer-controlled milling machine, innumerable products have been created there, among which the products from the crisis collection are perhaps the most important.

Since we acquired a second milling machine offering greater possibilities, new ideas and products are again bubbling to the surface. The milled bowls fit seamlessly into our tradition of not throwing things away and of getting the most out of the opportunities that we have ourselves created.

## MILLED OAK BOWLS



127 x 50 mm



161 x 50 mm



195 x 50 mm



230 x 50 mm



263 x 50 mm



297 x 50 mm



331 x 50 mm



365 x 50 mm



399 x 50 mm



800 x 50 mm