

# Friedman Benda explores aporetic architectural furniture in nine new designs

DESIGN / 25 JAN 2018 / BY PEI-RU KEH



'No Thing' on view at Friedman Benda New York. Photography: Daniel Kukla

When Juan Garcia Mosqueda shut the doors of his New York design gallery, Chamber, last year, it was more for personal reasons than anything else. 'I really wanted to go back to school,' Mosqueda says candidly, 'my undergraduate education was fine, but it didn't really provide me with the knowledge that I wanted to seek. I thought getting back to reading and writing would influence my shows and allow me to contribute something to design in the way we talk about products and objects, but on a metaphysical level.'

Currently enrolled at Harvard Graduate School of Design and pursuing a masters degree in cultural studies, Mosqueda's yearning for a more philosophical way of thinking clearly inspired his most recent endeavor: curating 'No-Thing - an exploration into aporetic architectural furniture' at Friedman Benda's project space, just a few streets away from where Chamber once stood in Chelsea. Based on Scottish psychiatrist R.D. Laing's notion of a state of 'in betweenness' of two entities, the exhibition encourages an ambiguity of self and intention towards the act of creating and design.

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‘Marc [Benda] asked me to curate a show in [this] space as soon as he knew that I was closing [Chamber] and working as an independent curator. We’d been talking before that for almost a year on ways to collaborate,’ Mosqueda adds.

The spirit of the exhibition clearly picks up where Chamber left off. Mosqueda has commissioned new works from nine emerging architectural practices that possess an academic bent, and challenged them to pursue a non-dogmatic approach to creating furniture.



*‘Where is this?’ (Bench), 2018 by Andy and Dave. Courtesy of Friedman Benda & Andy and Dave*

‘I [initially] asked each practice to create something – either furniture or lighting – that would serve as a microcosm of their ethos, so that when you looked at one of the pieces, you would get a clear idea of what that practice was all about,’ he says.

‘[Laing] locates the “no thing” as between two people, where the individual’s background are put behind and that space between, subject to subject, is identified and we leave out all the social constructs that are put upon us. That space is something really interesting and where these objects really emerge. It’s not about what the architects say or the subjects’ judgment, but its the combination of both where a new kind of aesthetic emerges,’ Mosqueda explains.

The firms represented include Andy and Dave (Brooklyn, USA), Ania Jaworska (Chicago, USA), architecten de vylder vinck taillieu (Gent, Belgium), Leong Leong (New York, USA), MILLIØNS (Los Angeles, USA), MOS (New York, USA), Norman Kelley (New York, Chicago, USA), SO – IL (Brooklyn, USA), and Pezo von

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Ellrichshausen (Concepcion, Chile). With creations appearing to use seemingly ordinary construction and materials, users and viewers alike are forced to form their own ideas about how the object should be used.



*'Heavy Rocker,' 2018, by Leong Leong and 'Freestanding Bookshelf,' 2017, by Ania Jaworska. Photography: Daniel Kukla*



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*'Where is this?' (Bench), 2018 by Andy and Dave. Courtesy of Friedman Benda & Andy and Dave*



*'Wanna go there!' (Partition) and 'Where is this?' (Bench), 2018, both by Andy and Dave. Courtesy of Friedman Benda & Andy and Dave*



*'Mesa Guillotina' by Pezo von Ellrichshausen. Courtesy of Friedman Benda and Pezo von Ellrichshausen. Photography: Andres Maturana*

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*'Heavy Rocker,' 2018, by Leong Leong*



*'Kamer Frank,' 2017, by Architecten de vylder vinck taillieu. Courtesy Friedman Benda and Architecten de vylder vinck taillieu. Photography: Filip Dujardin*

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