



AUTO- PROGETTAZIONE REVISITED

EASY-TO-ASSEMBLE FURNITURE

**INSTRUCTIONS BY: PHYLLIDA BARLOW,
BROUSSARD/SEILLES, MARTINO GAMPER,
RYAN GANDER, GRAHAM HUDSON,
KEUNG CAPUTO, LUCAS MAASSEN,
ENZO MARI, JOE PIPAL**

AUTOPROGETTAZIONE

This project was conceived while looking at two books sitting next to each other on my desk in a hotel room in Paris in 2006. I had just bought a tired old copy of Enzo Mari's catalogue from his 1974 Autoprogettazione and at the same time was some way through reading *Independent People*, a novel by Halldór Laxness. It struck me how comfortable Laxness's anti-hero, 'Bjartur of Summerhouses', – a man whose life is devoted entirely to tending a godforsaken field of sheep in turn-of-the-century Iceland – would be in Enzo Mari's world.

Philip Sharratt
Furniture Gallerist

AUTOPROGETTAZIONE REVISITED

Autoprogettazione Revisited celebrates the influence of renowned Italian designer Enzo Mari's 1970s project for self-made furniture. Free on request, it contained a set of instructions for 19 pieces of furniture in the form of cutting plans and axonometric drawings. A personal manifesto, Mari's text laid out the issue he saw as central to industrial production – the quality-quantity ratio, quality being defined as when the shape of a product does not 'seem' but simply 'is'. For Mari, this statement was not a paradox. In a text accompanying the instructions, he wrote that 'anyone, apart from factories and traders, can use the designs to make them by themselves', and asked that photographs of the resulting pieces be sent to his studio – a process that Autoprogettazione Revisited aims to continue 35 years after the project's inception.

Autoprogettazione has inspired a generation and Mari's influence is apparent in the responses to the project. There is a generosity and sincerity in the resulting work that resonates with the goodwill of Mari's original proposal, from Graham Hudson's orthopaedic benevolence towards cast-off broken chairs in Design for a Revolution to Clemence Seilles' and Travis Broussard's Auto-deproduction raft that aims to 'celebrate the death and therefore life of all things and beings'. Some of the pieces seem imbued with a personality.

Kueng Caputo's elegant, leggy light Lam-pada A Stelo looks as if it might lope off across the room to light a dark corner while Joe Pipal's Bookshelf leans languorously against a wall.

The fact that there are so many chairs on show must tell us something of the fondness for this most intimate of furniture pieces, for the human scale of a chair, the way it holds the body. The chairs in Autoprogettazione Revisited evolve from the varying approaches of the designers: Ryan Gander uses two identical Konstantin Grcic Chair Ones treated differently with an Ikea chair pad and a collapsed cardboard box. Gander says, 'I like the point that things already exist, you see, and true problem-solving is to rule nothing out'. Lucas Maassen's beautiful Script Chair continues the open-source and collaborative design apparent in the original Autoprogettazione thinking, and made topical by proliferating digital technologies. Martino Gamper's Sedia db is perhaps the purest response to Mari's originals: a chair so self-assured in its simplicity that it simply 'is'.

Phyllida Barlow's timber flipchart of exuberant drawings reflects the influence that Mari's working method had on her sculptures when, as an art student in the 70s, she was taught the basics of engineering a built work.

Mari was ultimately disappointed with the original response to Autoprogettazione, believing that 'only a very few, 1 or 2% understood the meaning of the experiment' expressing frustration that the catalogue was used as a DIY manual explaining '... the end product, although usable, is only important because of its educational value'.

Enzo Mari hoped that the idea of Autoprogettazione would last into the future. Autoprogettazione Revisited reveals that it has done just that. Not all of the artist/designer responses in Autoprogettazione Revisited can be duplicated by the enthusiast, but they are inspirational and without a doubt follow the Mari principle that 'by thinking with your own hands, by [making] your own thoughts you make them clearer'.

Vanessa Norwood
Head of AA Exhibitions

FRAMING AUTOPROGETTAZIONE: NOTES ON THE WORK AND LIFE OF ENZO MARI

BY TIMOTHY IVISON

'The task of transforming is the only course through which knowledge may be obtained.'

The career of Enzo Mari has spanned over five decades of rigorous investigation into everyday spaces and objects. Never content to define the limits of his field, he instead sees his life as 'devoted entirely to designing forms'. From elegantly simple objects to technically complex exhibition designs, a passion for form and utility permeates his entire body of work. In every medium, his question is the same: *what is essential?* The Autoprogettazione project that forms the basis of this exhibition is one of Mari's most innovative works, capturing not only his quality of form but also the generosity of his method – what he calls the *égalité* of design.

Mari's practice as a designer began by circuitous route. Born in Novara in 1932, he was raised primarily in Milan. His family was of modest means but he was sent to the best schools, as his father sincerely hoped he would become a teacher. There was no money for a radio or newspapers, but there were around the house works of classic literature, which young Enzo would try to decipher. While Mari was still at school, his father became ill and, as the eldest son, it fell upon him to go out to work and take care of the family. By Mari's account he worked at nearly 30 different jobs during this period, trying his hand at any kind of artisanal work he could find. Though it was a struggle to make ends meet, he learned by doing, and always got by through sheer improvisation.

When he realised that he could enrol at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan without a high school diploma, he took up painting and stage design, applying some of the rudimentary skills he'd learned to the study of fine art. Many of his friends from Milan graduated around this time, and quickly found secure jobs, but he noticed that they had no real interest in their work, preferring to discuss sport, and especially cycling. In this way, Mari realised the meaning of alienated labour – something he continues to rail against more than 50 years

on. His conviction was, and still is, that art and design are their own form of education; that practice and pedagogy are inseparable and that the work itself is a protest against reality – as he says, 'allegories of a society that, perhaps, could exist'.

In the mid-1950s Mari's design work evolved out of a synthesis of many of the elements found in these early experiences. His ability to improvise and investigate, to learn by doing – coupled with a keen understanding of spatial dynamics and rigorous attention to form – led to the making of three-dimensional constructions as well as a series of paintings dealing with the geometric abstraction of perspective and the psychology of vision. By 1957, he had met the designer Bruno Munari and expanded his repertoire to the design of exhibitions and displays, as well as graphics. That same year, he made a piece for his own children, 16 Animali, which Bruno Danese would later put into production for his gallery. Essentially a children's toy, 16 Animali was a wood block puzzle that seemed to encapsulate the whole of Mari's design philosophy: a work of essential forms, arranged in a functional manner, operating in three dimensions and educating the user through the process of their transformation of the objects. The piece was a success and he soon moved towards product design as a viable outlet for his creative energies.

Beginning in the early 1960s with his work for Danese, Mari truly came into his own as a product designer, working on everything from trays and paperweights to flower vases and lamps. This transition gave rise to one of the hallmark tensions in Mari's work – the tension between the vision of the craftsman artist and the opportunities and limitations of working in an industrial context. A self-described leftist, Mari was ideologically aligned with the radical student and workers' movements of the 1960s and 70s, and was opposed to the division of labour, and yet, as a designer, he wanted to believe in the democracy of mass production. He seemed intent on elevating industry to an art form – grafting two opposites.

Thus, Mari invested an unprecedented level of personal education and involvement in fabrication in an industry that had become complacent about the standards of the assembly line. Indeed, Mari still believes

making, but also the spirit of participation and autonomy emerging in the culture at large.

The spirit of Autoprogettazione continues in the exhibition that you have before you, branching off in radical directions that even Mari never would have predicted. As Mari's career has continued to develop and change, so has the Autoprogettazione, as it gains new relevance for every generation that is discovering its own innate ability to create.

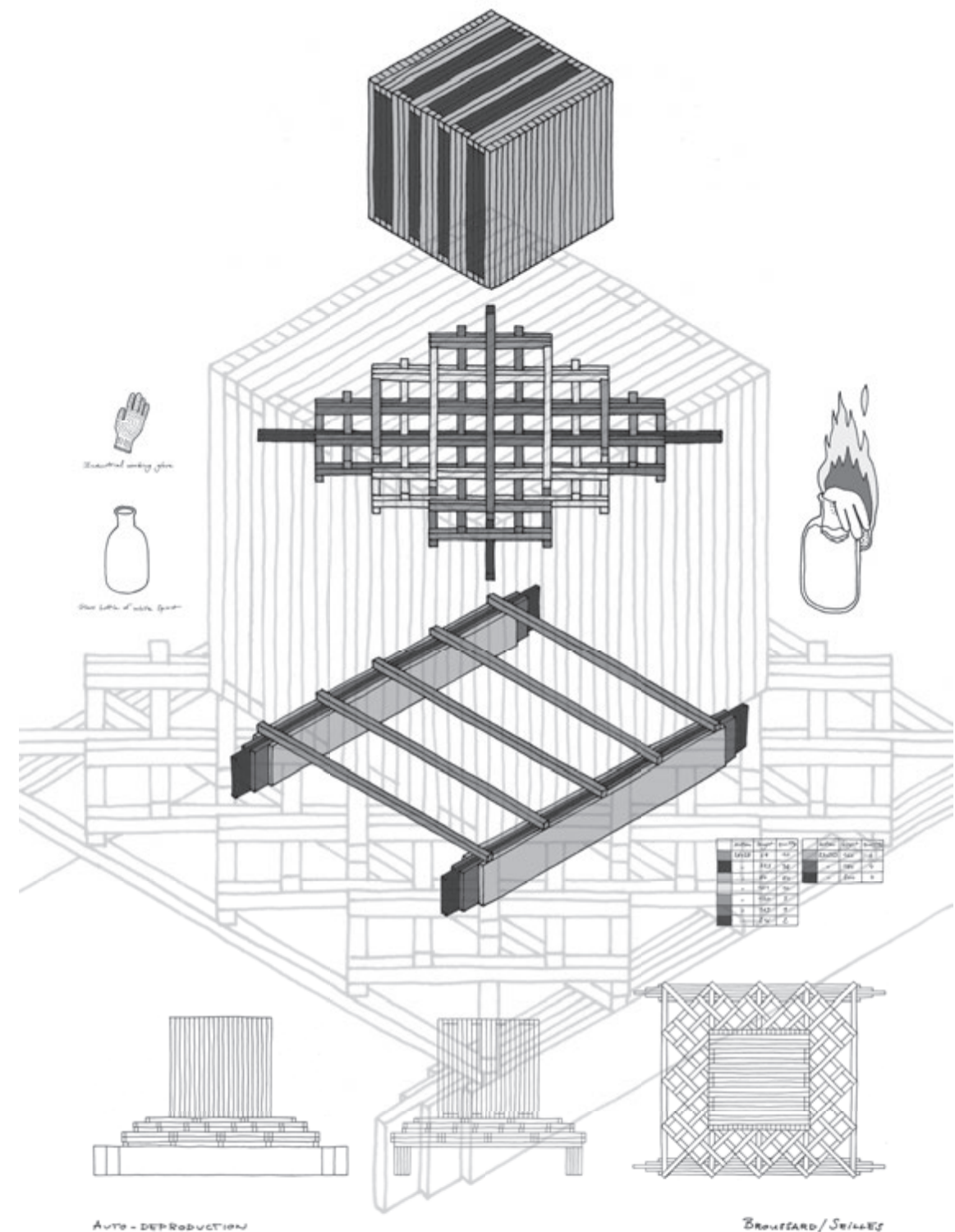
VBVB How much is the catalogue, then or in hindsight, a didactic and educational vehicle rather than a design manual?

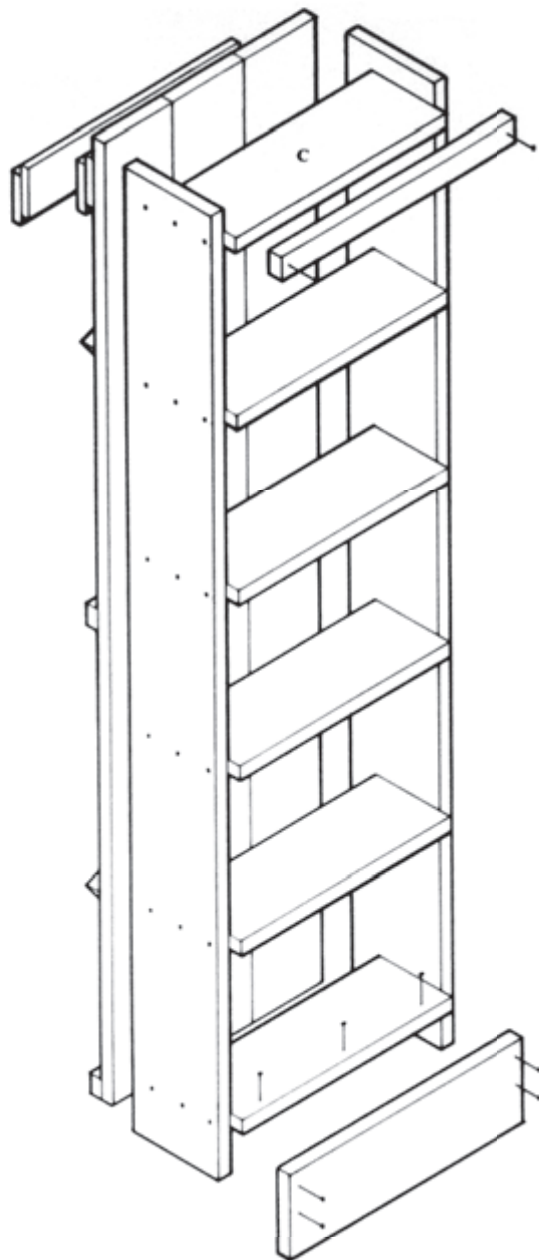
VBVB How important is it that people are able to make their own furniture – that they understand the effort that goes into making a chair, a table or a shelf and the consideration that goes into providing a self-build manual that allows them to do something themselves, rather than buying it in a shop.

VBVB If you were to release the Autoprogettazione today, what would you change?

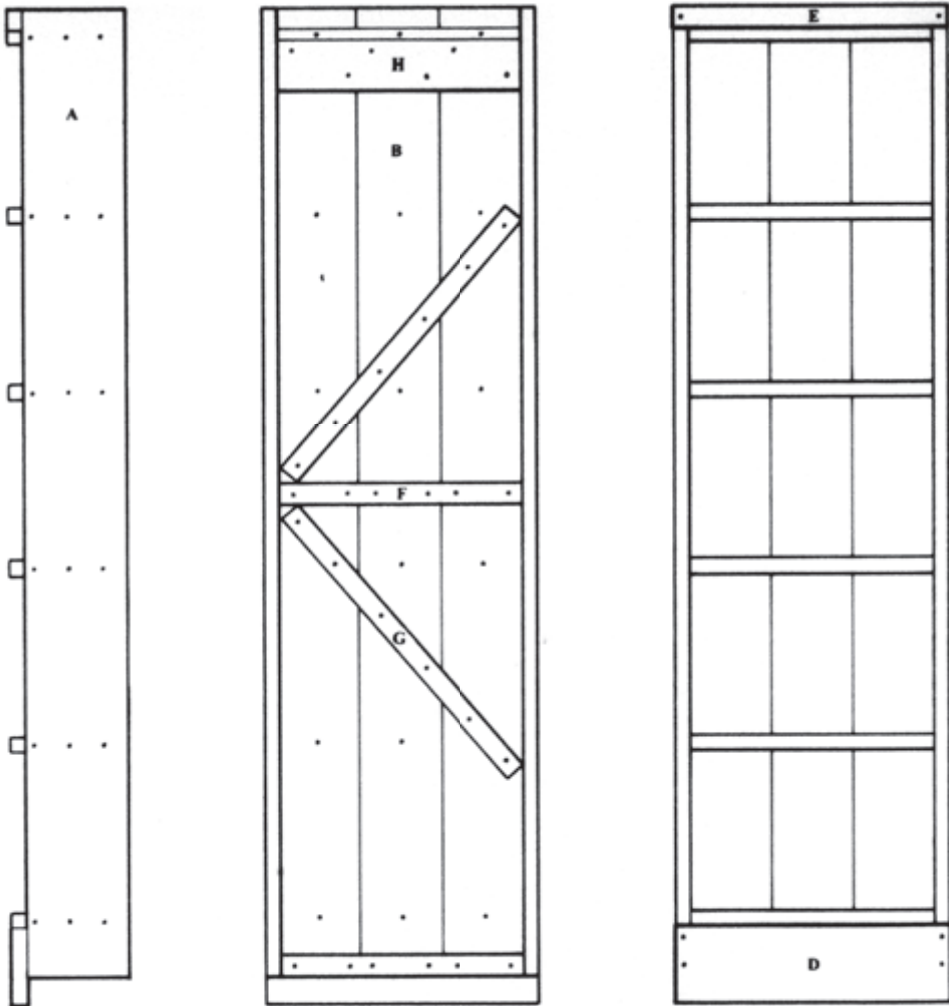
VBVB What does taste mean to you? Do you think that one can learn or teach good taste?

Broussard/Seilles
Auto-deproduction, 2009

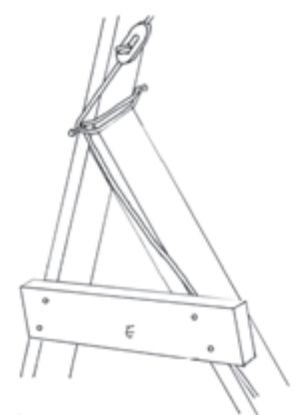
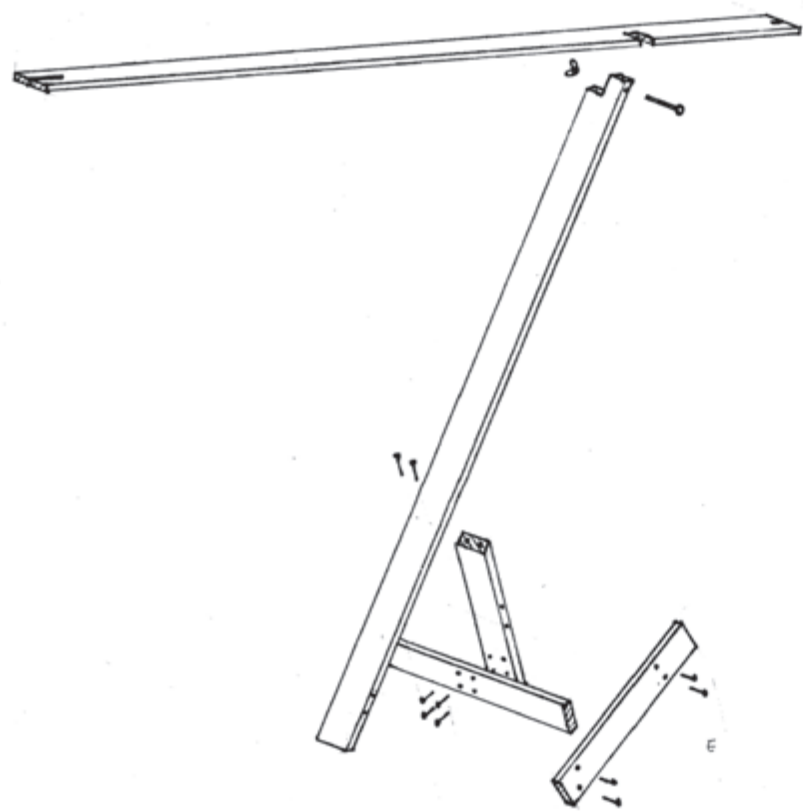




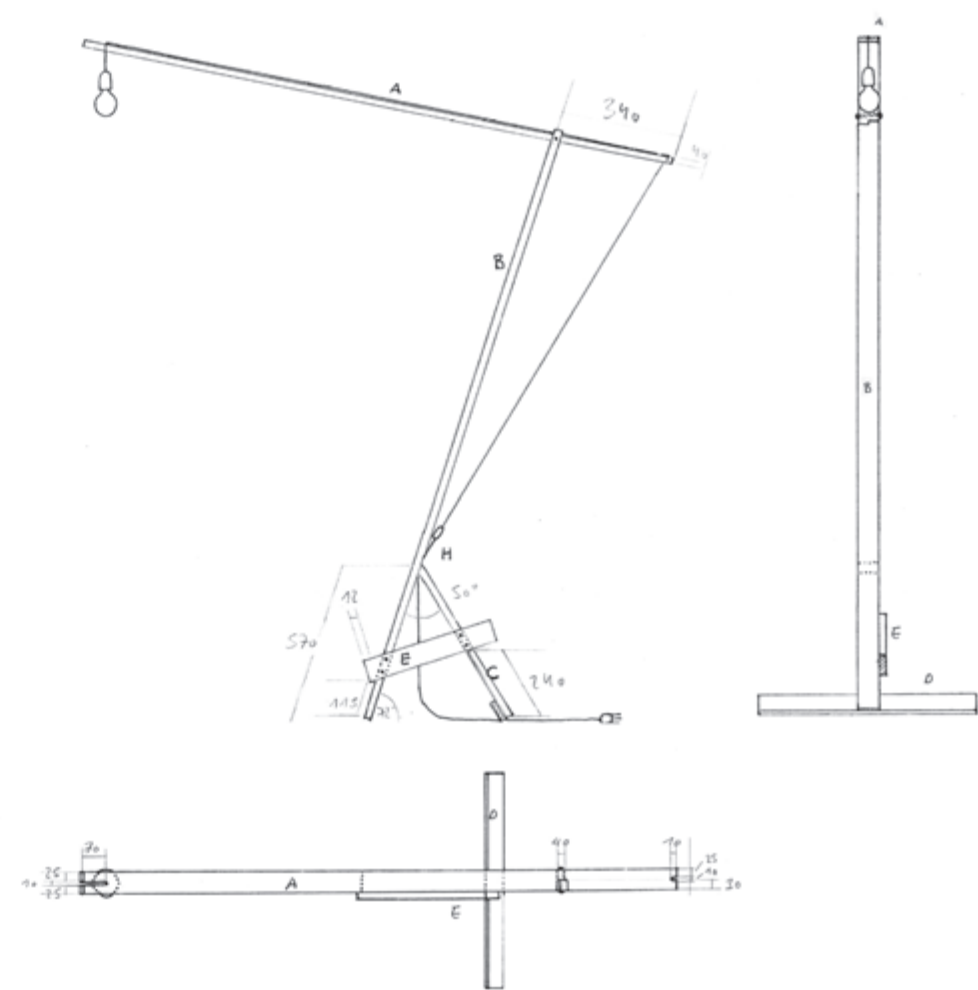
SCALE 1:5	09/2009
BOOKSHELF AUTOPROGETTAZIONE	
JOE PIPAL WWW.PIPAL.CO.UK	



CUTTING LIST (MM)									
	MATERIAL	SECTION	LENGTH	QTY		MATERIAL	SECTION	LENGTH	QTY
A	PINE	144 x 18	1400	2	E	PINE	32 x 18	393	1
B	—	119 x 18	1400	3	F	—	32 x 18	397	2
C	—	119 x 18	357	6	G	—	32 x 18	500	2
D	—	119 x 18	393	1	H	—	70 x 12.5	357	4



DETAIL KNOT

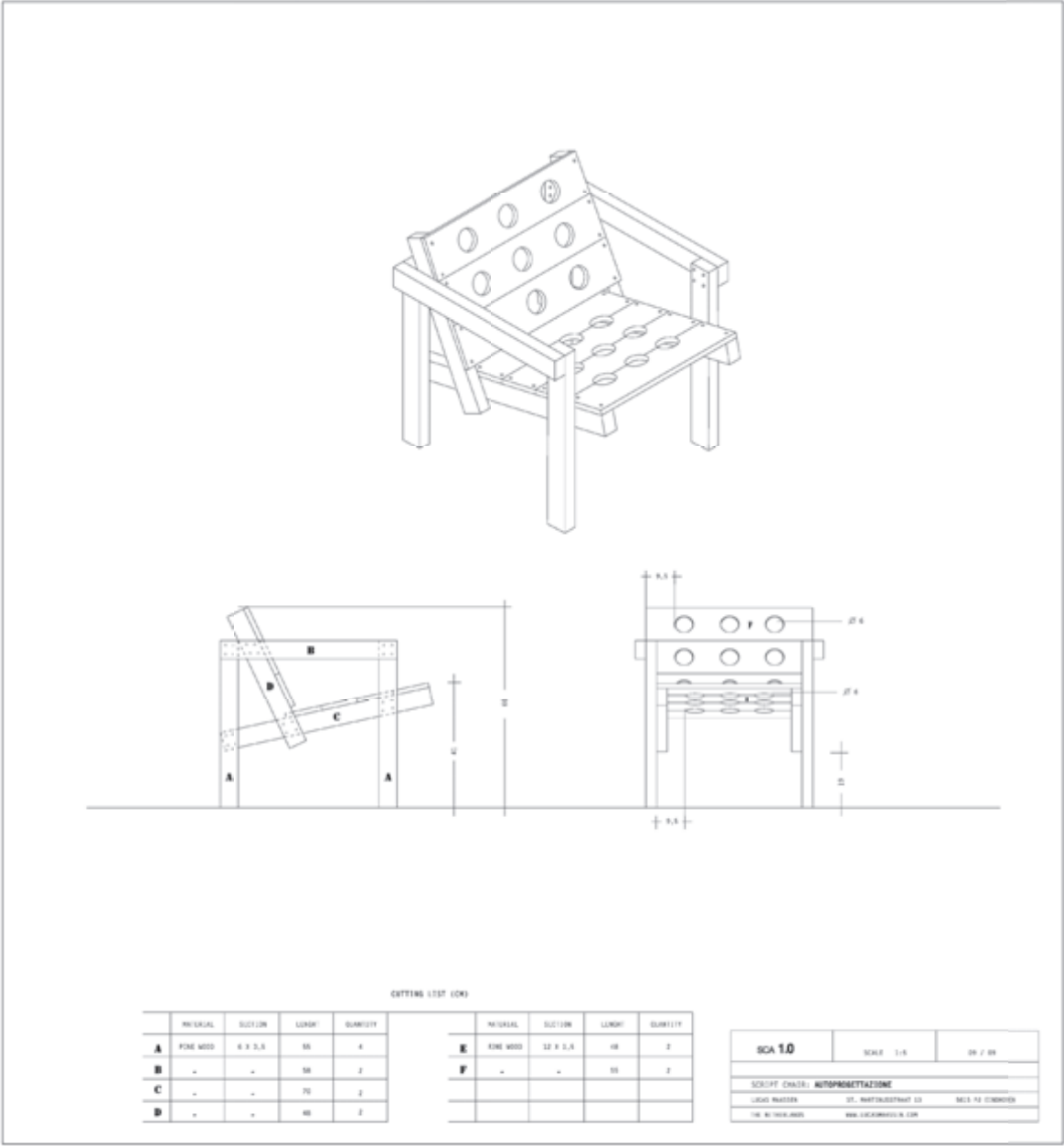


	WIDTH/DEPTH	LENGTH	LAMPADA A STELO
A	60 x 18	1720mm	KUENG CAPUTO
B	" "	1780mm	LEIMBACHSTR. 5
C	" "	620mm	CH - 8041 ZÜRICH
D	" "	620mm	
E	" "	480mm	SCALE 1:6
F	LIGHT BULB		
G	LAMP HOLDER WITH 4,3m CABLE		
H	SWITCH AFTER 2,7m (AFTER LIGHT BULB)		

Graham Hudson
Designs For A Revolution, 2009



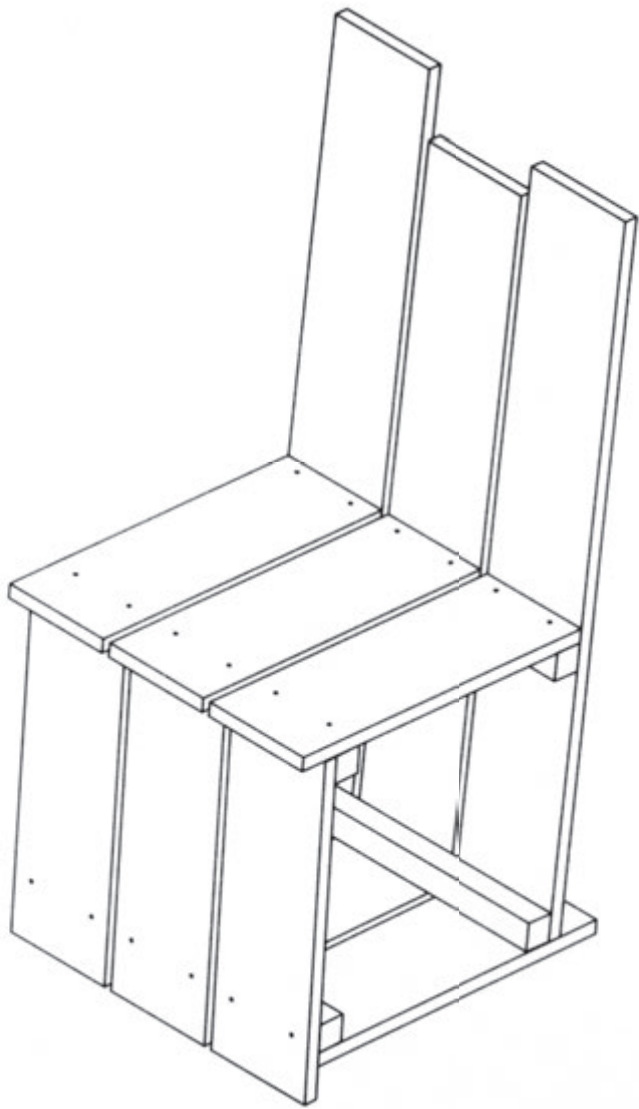
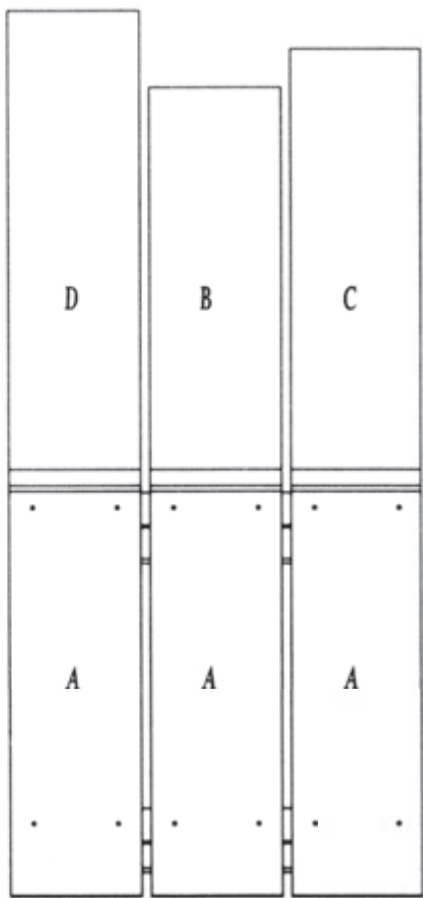
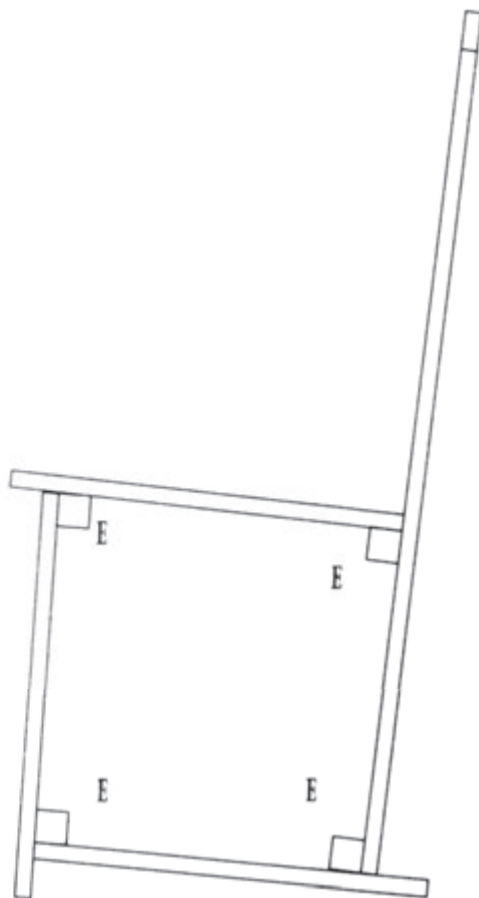
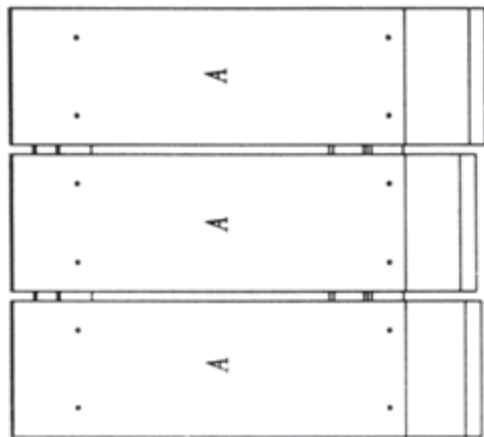
Lucas Maassen
Script Chair, 2009



CUTTING LIST (CM)				
MATERIAL	SIZES	LENGTH	QUANTITY	
A	PINE WOOD	4 x 3.5	55	4
B	"	"	58	2
C	"	"	70	2
D	"	"	48	2

MATERIAL	SIZES	LENGTH	QUANTITY	
E	PINE WOOD	12 x 3.5	48	2
F	"	"	55	2

SCA 1.0			SCALE: 1:5	DB / 09
SCRIPT CHAIR: AUTOPROJEKTION				
LUCAS MAASSEN		ST. ANTONISSTRAAT 10		WEL 70 CHAIRS
THE NETHERLANDS		WWW.LUCASMAASSEN.COM		

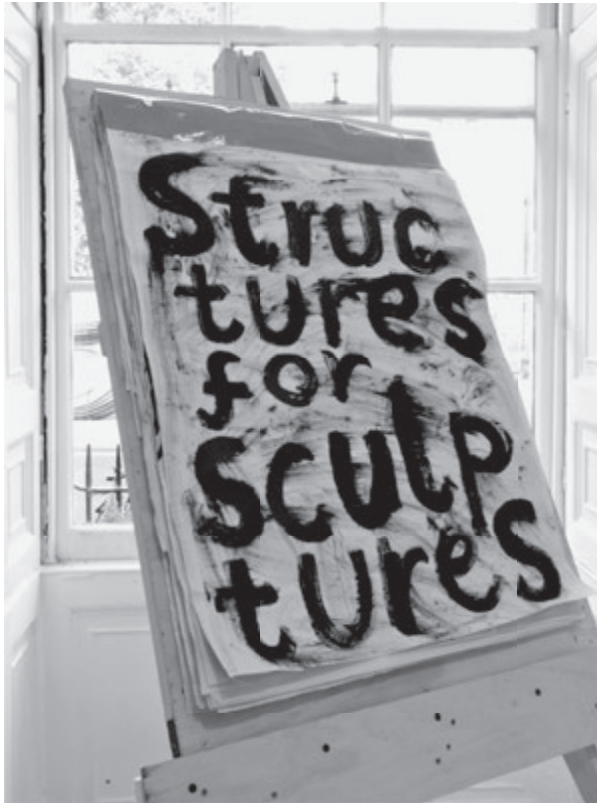


	SEZIONE	LUNGHEZZA	QUANTITA
A	140 x 18/20mm	410mm	9
B	"	820mm	1
C	"	860mm	1
D	"	900mm	1
E	34 x 34mm	440mm	4

MASTER
1 0 0 0 0 1

Autoprogettazione Architet		A3
SCALE 1:1		DISS. 1 OF 1

Phyllida Barlow
Untitled: timber flipchart, marker pens, tape
Structure realised by Luke McCreddie from
drawings by Phyllida Barlow, 2009



AUTOPROGETTAZIONE STUDENT WORKSHOP

AA First Year Studio Master Valentin Bontjes van Beek led a design workshop allowing three AA students – Korey Kromm, Stefan Laxness and Alma Wang – to respond to the Autoprogettazione manual, and through the modification of Mari's instructions, generate work that experiments with the scale and material of the furniture.

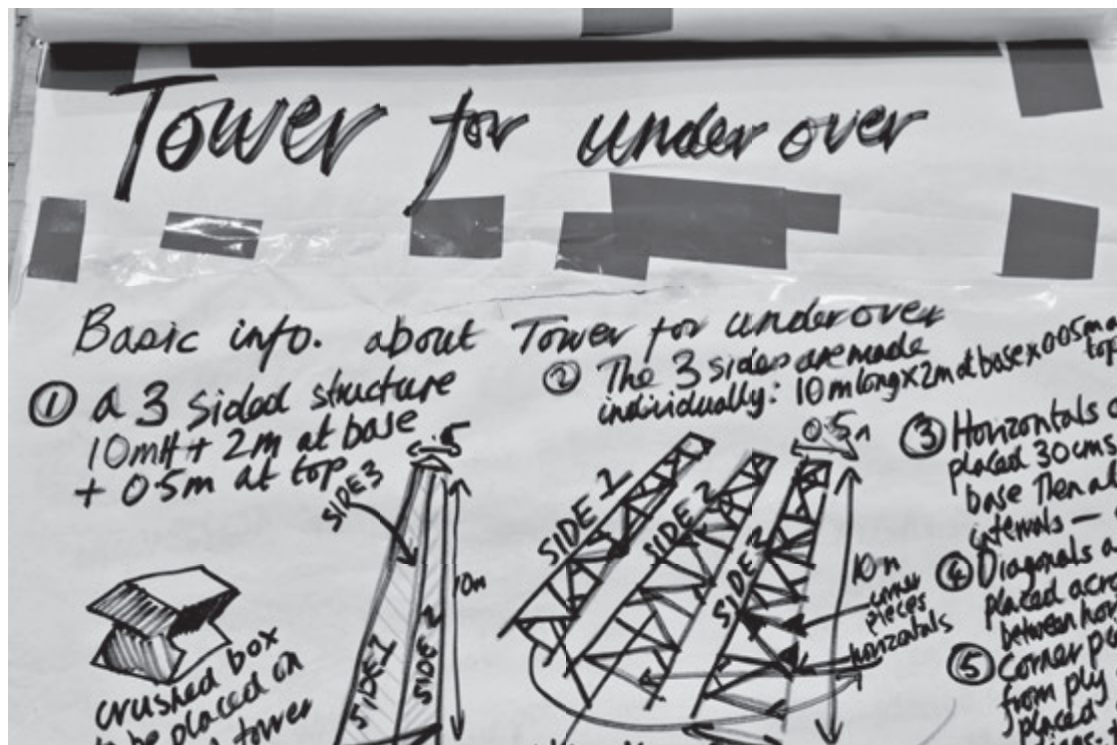
Brief

1. Get the Enzo Mari Autoprogettazione book.
2. Choose one piece of furniture from the catalogue and construct the piece as instructed.
3. Fabricate the piece again but this time alter the instruction by a ratio of either 30 or 70 per cent. Any addition, subtraction, scaling, misreading, amplification or whatever you choose to do should be in reference to the original instructions, literally or conceptually. All changes should be first made through the instructions.

Note

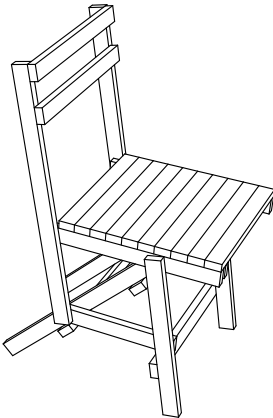
Remember, any instruction is there to be followed or disregarded. This project is about the fabrication of something. Anything that is to be displayed in public has to convey a degree of generosity. Don't be shy.

Valentin Bontjes van Beek

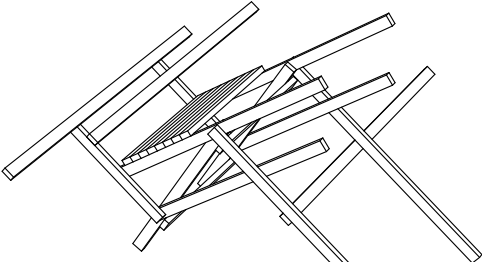


the above image is a
selected view of the accu-
mulation of all 7 series of
chairs around the same
origin point

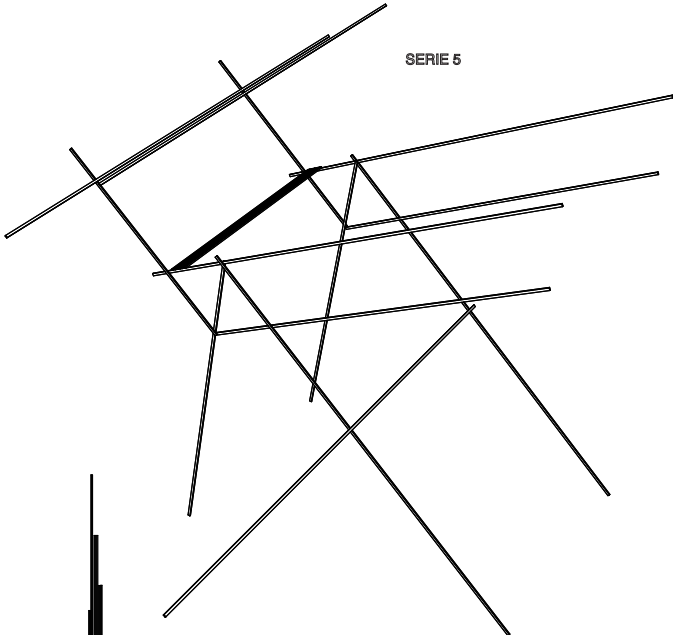
SERIE 0



SERIE 1



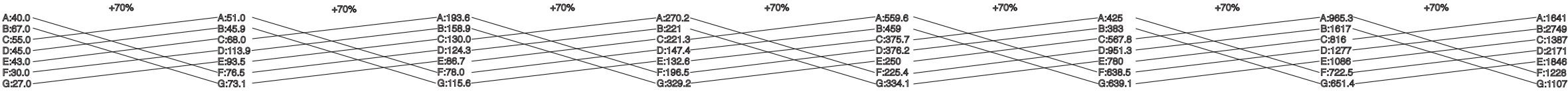
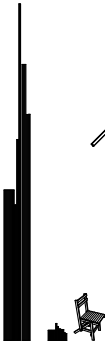
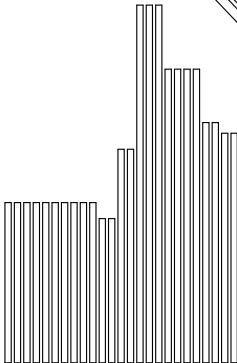
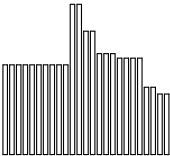
SERIE 5



SHIFT SYSTEM:

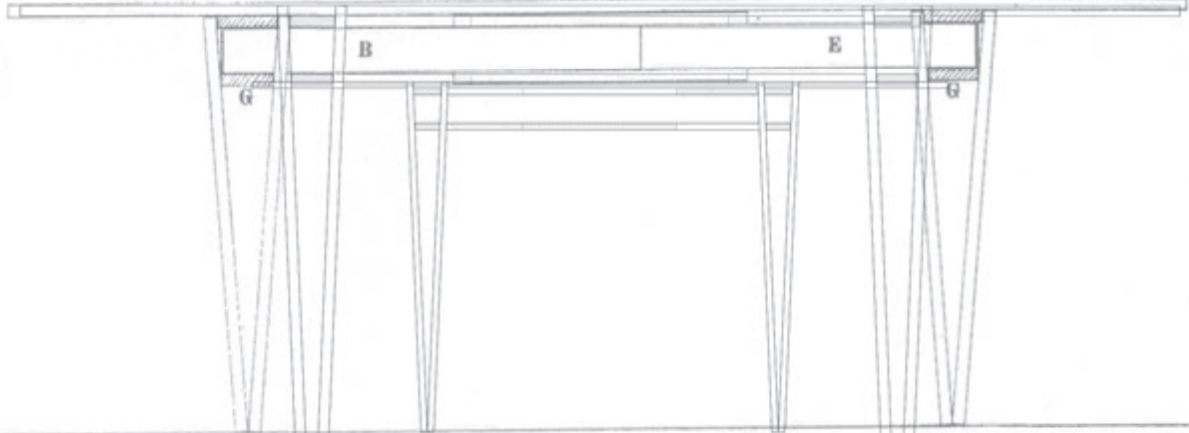
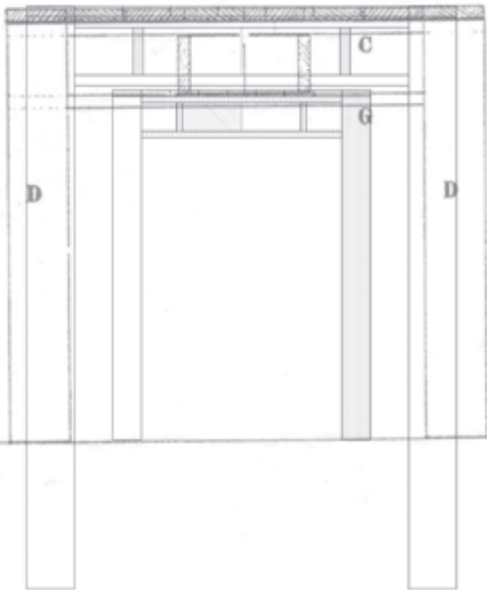
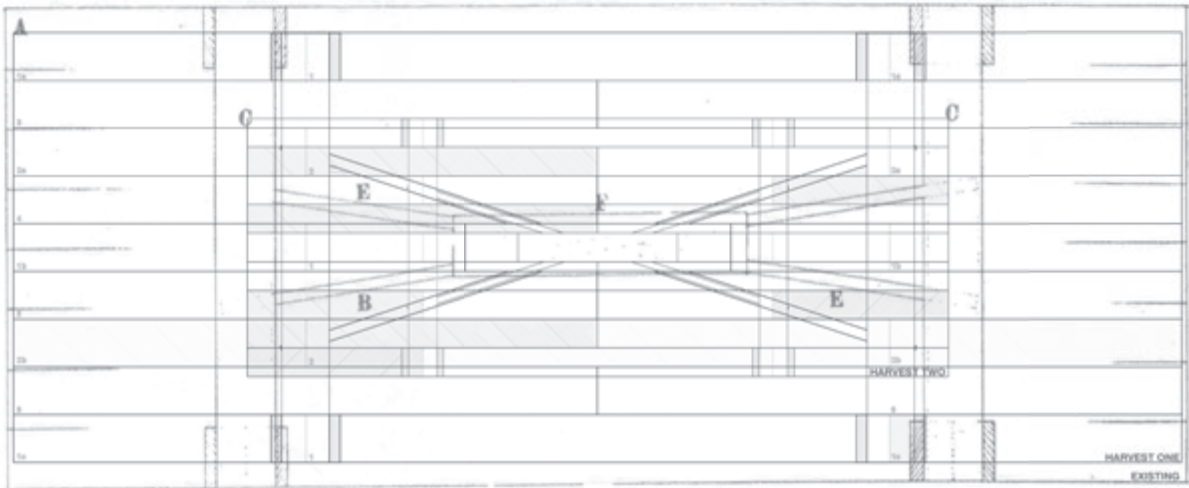
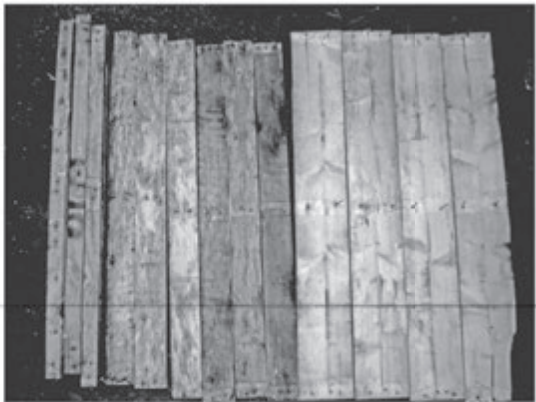
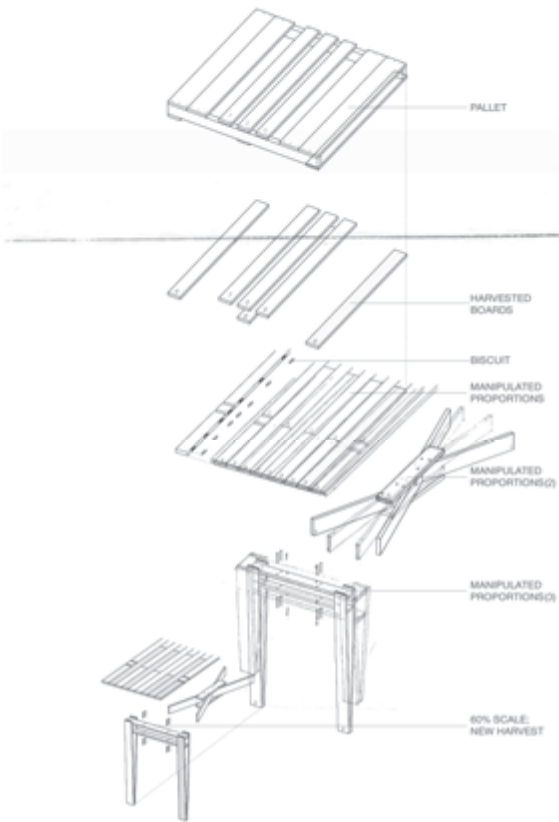
da= dimension of letter a

-2; da+70%
SERIE 0: A(da) B(da) C(da) D(da) E(da) F(da) G(da)
SERIE 1: A(da) B(da) C(da) D(da) E(da) F(da) G(da)
SERIE 2: A(da) B(da) C(da) D(da) E(da) F(da) G(da)
...



EIGHT CHAIRS: USING ENZO MARI'S ANNOTATION AND A SIMPLE SYSTEM THAT SHIFTS THE DIMENSIONS OF THE PIECES
NEEDED.

by Stefan Laxness

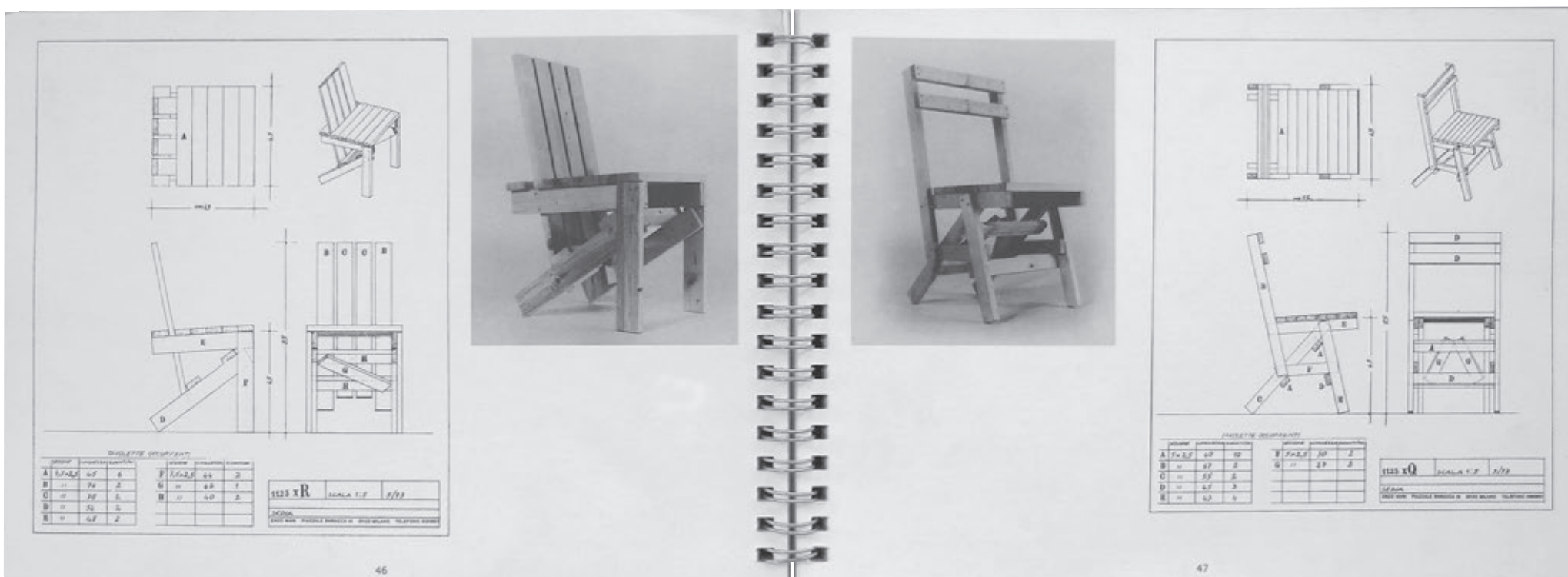
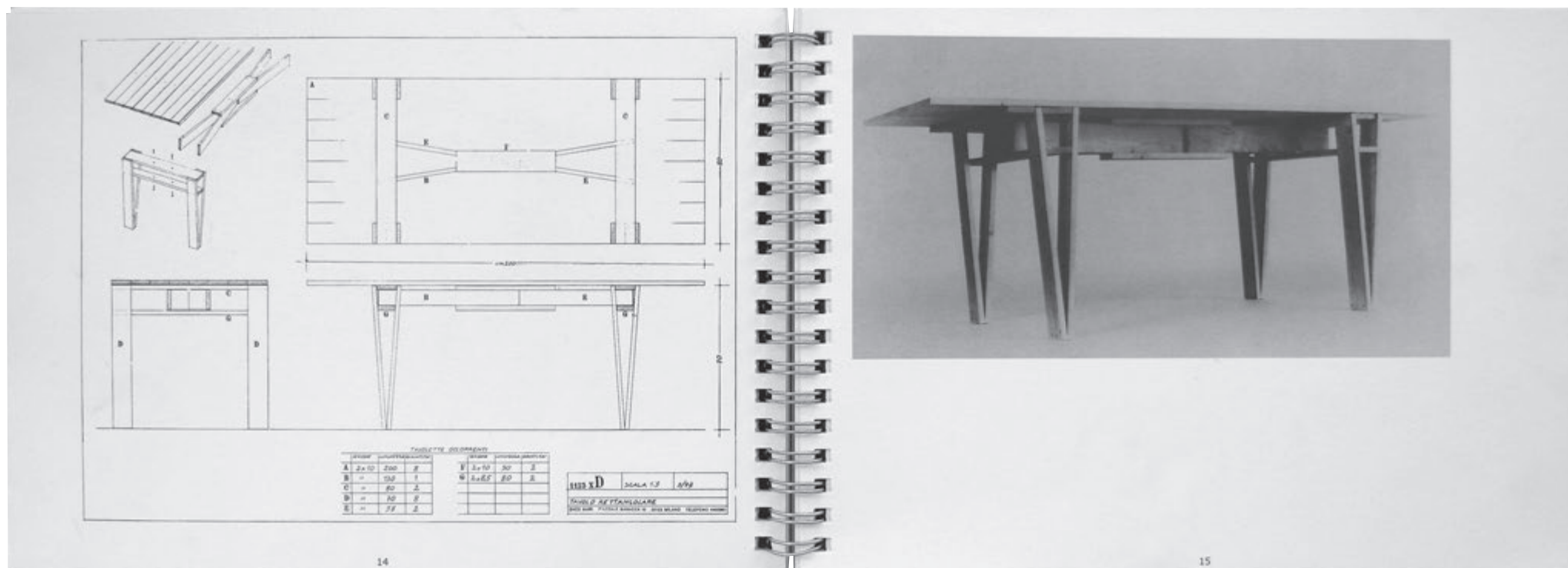


TAVOLETTE OCCORRENTI

	SEZIONE	LUNGHEZZA	QUANTITA'
A	2x9,5x4 3x10	110/55	8
B	2x9,5x4 11	55/32,5	1
C	2x9,5x4 11	80	2
D	2x9,5x4 11	110/55	8
E	11/3	58	2

	SEZIONE	LUNGHEZZA	QUANTITA'
F	2x9,5x4 2x10	50/30	2
G	2x9,5x4 2x10,5	80/30	2
CUTS			

1123 x D SCALA 1:5 5/93
OVERLAY OF THREE TABLES
TAVOLO RETTANGOLARE
ENZO MARI PIAZZALE BARACCA 10 20123 MILANO TELEFONO 4693861



CONTRIBUTORS' BIOGRAPHIES

GRAHAM HUDSON

Hudson's work responds to specific projects and environments using readily available, familiar materials such as cardboard, plastic bags, furniture, scaffolding and pallets. The resulting sculptures are mock-monumental and often seemingly alive – paint spills, tape peels, bits blow over in the wind or teeter on the point of collapse. Many works are material configurations that invite collaborators to participate in their completion; these object arrangements can be understood as performance documentation. Recent group shows include 'Ctrl, Alt shift', Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, 2009, '6 of 1', live art performance, Camden Arts Centre, 2008 and 'Notes on a Return', Laing Gallery, Newcastle; solo shows at Monitor, Rome, 2009, Jan Cunen Museum, Oss, 2008 and Locust Projects, Miami, 2008. Forthcoming shows include LMCC Sculpture Park, New York, 'Newspeak', Saatchi Gallery, London, 'Lost and Found', Milton Keynes Gallery and a solo show at Zinger PRESENTS, Amsterdam. Graham Hudson was born in Kent in 1977 and lives and works in London.

PHYLLIDA BARLOW

Phyllida Barlow's work incorporates an enormous range of mass-produced materials including cardboard, fabric, paper, glue, paint, plastic, wood, rubber, hardboard and adhesive tape. Her work questions the nature and role of the sculptural object in contemporary culture, utilising an extensive, fluid vocabulary and immense enthusiasm for engaging with the physical 'stuff' of the world. She sets up new relationships, experimenting with unexpected combinations of materials to create objects and environments which encourage us to see the everyday world with fresh eyes. Recent solo and group shows include Peninsula, an installation commissioned for the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, 2004–05 and SKIT, Bloomb-erg Space, 2005; SCAPE, a ten-sculpture installation commis-sioned for Spacex, Exeter, 2005

and Works on Paper, Leeds City Art Gallery, new acquisitions by the Henry Moore Foundation, Leeds, 2005–06. Phyllida Barlow was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne and graduated from the Slade School of Fine Art where she is currently Professor of Fine Art and Director of Undergraduate Studies.

LUCAS MAASSEN

At what point does furniture exist? Lucas Maassen started exploring this idea in 2002 by listing dollhouse chairs for sale on eBay without mentioning their scale or true nature. They became real furniture in the mind of potential buyers who placed bids on the items. Scale became an important subject in his 2003 graduation work, Sitting Chairs, a tableau vivant featuring an animistic family of chairs. Small changes to conventions – such as the removal of rear legs or sometimes the addition of feet, arms and hands – grant the chairs life. Recent work has focused on the OS (OpenStructures) project initiated by Thomas Lomme, which explores the possibility of a modular construction model where everyone designs for everyone else on the basis of one shared geometrical grid. This modular way of designing for the OS grid inspired Maassen to write his own post-digital 'script' for the 'Script Furniture' series. Lucas Maassen is a graduate of the Design Academy Eindhoven and has worked for Droog Design, Unilever, Philips, the Grand Palais, Paris as well as the Dutch Architecture Institute (NAI). He has exhibited worldwide in (MoMA) New York, (Grand Palais) Paris, Miami, Cologne, Milano, Turin, Eindhoven and Rotterdam. He lectures on design at the ICT & Media Design department of the Fontys University of Applied Sciences.

MARTINO GAMPER

Martino Gamper has an abiding interest in the psychosocial aspects of furniture design: in particular, he has a love of corners and the multiple emotions provoked by the single right-angled boundary. Alongside this concern with underused spaces, Gamper also nurtures an interest in unwanted objects.

Reworking furniture that has been dumped on the streets, he has created a mismatched family of objects. Behind each of Gamper's pieces, there is a story; one that involves materials, techniques, people and places. The finished product is a token of all that, the thing that sits in the brief interlude between making and using. After an apprenticeship in cabinet-making, Gamper studied sculpture and product design at the University of Applied Art and the Academy of Fine Art in Vienna. In 1996 he moved to Milan, working as a freelancer for a number of design studios. In 1998 he moved to London to study for a masters at the RCA, graduating in 2000. After that he started his own practice where he develops and produces a wide range of objects, from limited edition to semi-industrial products and site-specific installations. His work has been exhibited in various galleries including the V&A, Design Museum, Sotheby's, Nilufar Gallery, Oxo Tower, Kulturhuset/Stockholm, MAK/Vienna and the National Gallery Oslo.

KUENG CAPUTO

Sarah Kueng and Lovis Caputo work with an ironic and playful approach to daily life. They especially like to work with given circumstances and to analyse the facts until they can figure out a surprisingly simple outcome. For example, in the Copy By Kueng Caputo project, the starting point was a given situation – a small confined space with a large group exhibition showing a lot of very different works by their classmates. To create a dialogue between these different works, they proposed to copy the other works: visitors would walk around to look for the original to compare it with the copy. Similarly, the Salone Satellite 07 furniture fair was a giant exhibition where visitors would walk many kilometres and collect thousands of impressions. What they needed most, thought Kueng Caputo, was a calm place to relax for a moment. And this is what they provided by constructing a cardboard hotel called Five Stars Cardboard. The two young designers are based in Zurich

and have been working together since 2005.

JOE PIPAL

Joe Pipal is a furniture-maker from east London. His practice is based on making furniture to commission but he also devotes time to developing his own work. He has been a recipient of a development award from the Clerkenwell Green Association (now Craft Central), scholarships to craft schools in Maine and Colorado in the USA, and a 3-month residency at Cove Park in Scotland. Joe has exhibited at 100% Design, Origin craft fair, Midcentury Modern, Made in Clerkenwell and, most recently, in a solo show Pulling Out All The Stops at Craft Central, as part of London Design Week 2009. He studied cabinet-making at London Guildhall University and prior to that Fine Art at Notting-ham Trent.

CLEMENCE SEILLES AND TRAVIS BROUSSARD

Clemence and Travis met in autumn 2008 in Vienna when they were pouring artificial wax for the 'first supper' of Jerszy Seymour. They subsequently took part in his 'salon des amateurs' and they continue to be involved in this exciting group in Berlin, where they live and work. Travis is Texan, raised in a wooded area near an old Spanish silver mine. He studied under a master metalsmith as well as at various schools in Texas and Germany and finally the Academy of Art and Design in Basel. Clemence is French and grew up in a valley with the Alps for neighbours and the woods for a playground. She studied at the school of art and design in Reims before reaching London and the Royal College of Art.

RYAN GANDER

Through various media such as installation, advertisement, music, performance and literature, Gander's work generates dialogue where the familiar becomes strange, and vice versa. Having completed a research residency at the Jan van Eyck Akademie in Maastricht, Gander participated in the artists' residency programme of the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam.

His first solo exhibition was held in March 2002 at the International 3 Gallery in Manchester, accompanied by a monograph entitled 'In a language you don't understand'. In 2003, Gander published the artists' book 'Appendix', produced a solo exhibition for the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam and won the Prix de Rome for sculpture (the national Dutch art prize). Earlier this year, Gander presented his first major solo retrospective exhibition in France, 'The die is cast', at Villa Arson, Nice, which followed two solo exhibitions running concurrently at Kadist Art Foundation and gb agency. Group shows include 'Desire Acquire' at the Bob van Orsouw Gallery, Zurich, 'The Space of Words' at MUDAM Musee d'Art Moderne Grand-Duc Jean, Luxembourg, and 'Younger than Jesus' at the New Museum in New York. In 2005 Gander was shortlisted for the Becks Futures prize at the ICA in London and won the Baloise Art Statement Prize at Art Basel. In 2006 he won the ABN AMRO prize of the Netherlands and the following year received the Paul Hamlyn Award for Visual Arts. He was recently awarded the Zurich Art Prize. Gander lives and works in London and is represented by Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York; Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam; gb Agency, Paris; Lisson Gallery, London and Taro Nasu Gallery, Tokyo.

BAHBAK HASHEMI-NEZHAD

Before studying product design at the Royal College of Art, London, Bahbak initiated a range of photography projects whilst studying Industrial Design at the University of Technology, Sydney. A long-term study trip to Fukuoka Japan started a string of projects that confirmed an interest in investigating the value of images and photography in product/spatial design practice. He is the recipient of numerous design and photography awards and has exhibited his work internationally. Bahbak lives and works in London.

IMAGE CREDITS

BLACK & WHITE SECTION

Graham Hudson and Phyllida Barlow instructions: photos by Sue Barr

Enzo Mari portrait: Ramak Fazel

COLOUR SECTION

Enzo Mari portrait and exhibition opening: photos by Valerie Bennett

Pieces by Graham Hudson, Martino Gamper, Joe Pipal, Lucas Maassen, Phyllida Barlow, Broussard/Seilles, Korey Kromm, Stefan Laxness, Alma Wang; and exhibition installation views and Enzo Mari lecture: photos by Sue Barr

Pieces by Keung Caputo and Ryan Gander: photos supplied by the artists.

Auto-assemble-food photographs by Bahbak Hashemi-Nezhad & Clemence Seilles



AA Exhibitions
aaschool.ac.uk/exhibitions

Autoprogettazione Revisited
Easy-to-Assemble Furniture
by Enzo Mari and Invited Guests

AA Gallery
3 to 27 October 2009
Monday to Friday 10am–7pm
Saturday 10am–3pm

Autoprogettazione Revisited conceived
by Philip Sharratt and Zak Kyes and
curated by AA Exhibitions: Vanessa
Norwood, Lee Regan and Luke Currall.

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private view event: Auto-assemble-food;
Centro Studi e Archivio della
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