

THE SOFT POWER SURVEY

DECEMBER 2018 / JANUARY 2019
ISSUE 119

MONOCLE

**INSIDE: JACINDA ON BEING PM AMANPOUR ON DANGER
AI WEIWEI ON AMERICA FRANCE'S QUEEN OF POP**

CAFÉ AFFAIRS: Can you still be a sexy nation? **BUSINESS:** Latvia's high flyer **CULTURE:** Are prizes bad for careers?
DESIGN: The cosiest Zürich apartment **ENTERTAINING:** How to host this Christmas season **FASHION:** The best shops in Italy

COME ON IN

Join our double-issue
season celebrations

LESSON LEARNED

REBELS, THINKERS AND FIXERS
ON THE MOMENTS THAT CHANGED
THEIR LIVES IN 2018



REPORTS: Insider gift guides to Tokyo, Copenhagen and Vancouver **HOLIDAY HOTELS** Mexico City, Porto and deepest Ireland. Miniature **CITY GUIDES** for Canberra, Charleston and Moscow. The new **WRAP STARS** revealed.

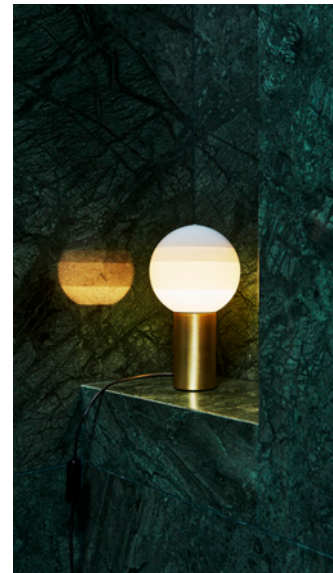


has boomed since the purchase, growing from eight to 21 employees.

The quality of the weighty fixtures now produced is telling. All the material is sourced from the EU: brass and porcelain from Italy and France, glass from the Czech Republic and Poland. And Valdemar is quick to explain that the brass arrives raw rather than assembly ready. “Seventy to 80 per cent of the value is added in the factory,” says Valdemar, pointing to the machines. These appliances are of a certain vintage, the reason being that modern,

electronic machines would require mass production (antithetical to company’s values) to offset their cost.

In a corner of the Karlskrona workshop sits an enormous ceiling lamp, which resembles a miniature Saturn destined for the Grand Hotel in Stockholm. The hotel has commissioned three such fixtures as it gives its café a more classic look. “It’s a lot of fun when we get those kinds of projects,” says Katarina. “We get old black-and-white photos and ask, ‘What was the designer of that lamp thinking?’” — MCH



(1) Karlskrona’s pendant, first made in 1884 (2) Brass lamp parts (3) Making Marset’s Jordi Canudas-designed Dipping Light (4) The light has been called a ‘performance piece’ (5) Seductive glow

Marset
Barcelona

“If you want to understand light, just look at nature,” says Javier Marset, the third generation to head his family’s Barcelona lighting firm, as he whisks MONOCLE through his showroom – a polychromatic pantheon of iconic shapes and forms.

“A sunrise evokes a sensation of warmth but the day’s light later becomes clearer, more energetic,” he says. “Then the sunset starts to relax us. Good lighting often reflects this cycle.”

Marked by its playful approach to light and shadow, Marset’s vision transcends simple science. It’s a brand that has embraced modernity but not forgotten its roots in the better lighting designs of the past. While today’s LED lighting (coming in both bendy strips and bulbs) lends itself malleability, many are missing the point by focusing on wild structural forms and forgetting that the purpose of this product is to create comfort. Marset, however, continues to push playfulness in a manner that doesn’t forget this simple value.

The family foundry manufactured its first lamp in 1976 and pivoted towards experimental, often eccentric but eminently practical, design in the mid-1990s. This led to still-iconic lamps, such as the mushroom-shaped portable FollowMe or Christophe Mathieu’s Discocó, which



continue to inform the brand’s aesthetic. “We like to say we take care of light,” says Marset. “We’re constantly refining the idea of the ideal intimate home – both outside and in – and exploring the use of different materials and also how we perceive light.”

Embracing colour and collaborations with daring designers has gilded the firm’s forward path. The Pleat Box series, a clay-textured collection with Catalan ceramics studio Apparatu, applies enamel paints on the inside to infuse lights with colour, while providing a pleasing glow. The design of Joan Gaspar’s sobering, straightforward Djembé ceiling lamp generates controlled intimacy in larger spaces. Marset describes Jordi Canudas’s psychedelic dipping lamp, meanwhile, as a “performance piece with a seductive glow”.

As Marset continues to play with the creation of a particular light for every space, synergy with other like-minded design luminaries is a source of boundary-pushing. “It works because we are curious,” he says. “It depends on how you view the world – being curious brings brighter fortunes.” — LA

THE WAY FORWARD

Tone it down

By Nolan Giles
Illustration Kyle Metcalf



1. Illuminated dips

As the modernisation of cars continues, two thirds of drivers on British roads now complain of being regularly dazzled by oncoming headlights. This is no surprise considering modern LED headlights are nearly three times as powerful as their perfectly fine halogen predecessors. Silent electric cars already trouble pedestrians and cyclists, so the added factor of blinding headlights is steering vehicle development in a dangerous direction.



2. Cabin fever

Ever sunk into your seat on the Eurostar only to pop on your shades to shield the icy glow of its laboratory-like lighting? Cabin lighting, whether on a train or plane, has a functionality factor but also plays a pivotal role in how comfortable we feel. Designers should take a cue from the soft, ambient lighting that makes a zippy journey on the French-Belgian Thalys high-speed train a pleasure. Another idea is to give passengers the option to dim their own seat lighting.



3. Make an entrance

As bricks-and-mortar retailers face up to the challenge of luring shoppers away from their electronic devices, it’s startling how few of them think about good interior lighting. Bigger brands that illuminate their shops like football stadiums should visit some of the cosy independents on London’s Crawford Street in Marylebone. Here the calming play between light and shade in shops such as Perfumer H aids a more relaxed retail experience.



4. Well-hung night lights

Creating a system of street lighting that provides mystique and security for night owls is a delicate art but do it correctly and a city’s after-hours economy can reap the rewards. Copenhagen’s modernist hanging street lamps offer illuminating night strolls, while Ljubljana in Slovenia is lit by the column-mounted 1920s streetlights of Joze Plecnik. Our city-planners need to find a balance between cutting carbon emissions and continuing to make our streets cosy.



5. Best reflection

When lighting the home, fans of now-scarce incandescent bulbs might look to Switzerland’s Righi Licht; those making the LED switch can also pick dimmable options from brands such as London’s Tala. Table lanterns can create a charming glow at the dinner table and uplighters will add a softer shine to walls. In Japan, the mirror lighting of Kaneka OLED aims to emit a glow that is as close to the warmth of sunlight as possible.