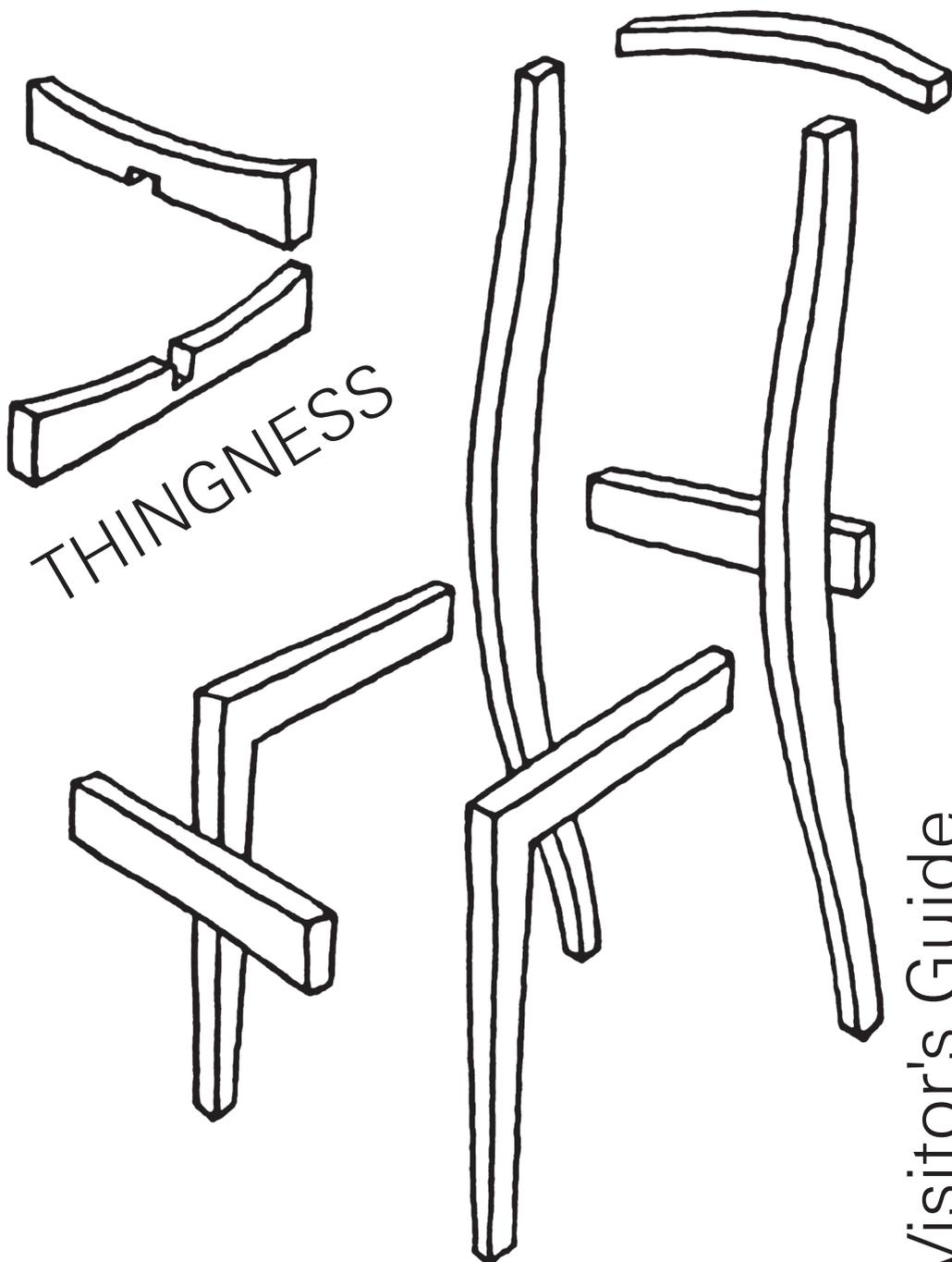


Jasper Morrison



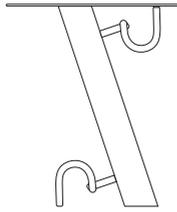
The 1980s

The Unimportance of Form

The designer is often seen as a giver of form to an industry whose technological expertise will allow production. Like most things it's not that simple and in this case there can be no text book approach to a particular problem, solutions are always arrived at in unexpected ways. Occasionally a form will arrive, either through hard analysis or, more satisfyingly, intuition and chance. Restricting the probability of finding appropriate form to these two unreliable sources is a mistake.

It's a fact that the physical appearance of an object is to most people most of that objects presence, but perhaps too much importance is attached to it. If we thought form less important we might develop a sensibility for other qualities in an object. Designing in a way that allows other aspects of an object's make-up to propose its form may be a step in the right direction.

If we think of design as an equation for getting more from objects then it's clear that an approach which relies on gratuitous novelty of form is not enough. Avoiding the issue of form altogether may provide a truer solution. The formal appearance of an object need not be the result of hours of careful analysis of the problem or pages of drawings. It could be the visual consequence of an idea, a process, a material, a function or a feeling. Then again it could arrive in the shape of a borrowed form or a stolen object. There can be no moral objection to this if the result contains something that wasn't there before. In fact the hi-jacking of everyday objects serves a dual-purpose of providing a new object in an economical manner and making the point that there is great beauty in the obvious or every-day. So describing the designer as a form-giver is inaccurate, he may be this but not only this and the less he concerns himself with 'creating' form the better for all of us!



Jasper Morrison
Handle Bar Table
1984



Cappellini
Plywood Bin
1990

Collection Vitra Design Museum



Architecture Design & Technology Press
Design, Projects and Drawings
1989

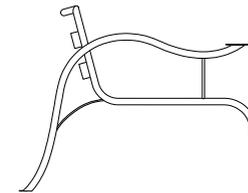


Cappellini
Red Carpet
1989

Collection Vitra Design Museum



Lars Müller Publishers
A World Without Words
1988

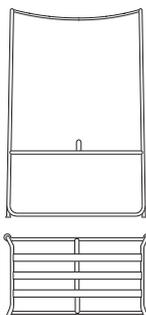


Cappellini
Thinking Man's Chair
1986

Collection Vitra Design Museum



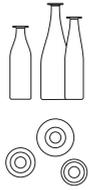
BD
Exhibition Post Cards
1989



SCP
Slatted Stool
1983

Thinking Man's Chair, Cappellini 1986

For a long time after I noticed an antique chair with its seat missing outside a shop I had the idea to do a chair consisting only of structural elements. Many sketches later I arrived at an approximation of the final shape, which included two small tables on the ends of the arms and an exotic assembly of curved metalwork. It was to be called "The Drinking Man's Chair". On my way back from a tobacconist's shop with a packet of pipe cleaners to make a model of the chair with, I noticed the slogan "The Thinking Man's Smoke" on the packet, which I quickly adapted as a more sophisticated title. Later on with the prototype in front of me, destined for a show in Japan, I added the dimensions as a kind of surrogate decoration. Zeev Aram exhibited and sold it in London at his showroom, and Giulio Cappellini, seeing it there, contacted me about producing it. That's how I got started with Cappellini. He and Sheridan Coakley in London were the first manufacturers to show interest in what I was doing.



Cappellini
3 Green Bottles
1988

Three green bottles, Cappellini, 1988

I intended to have the 3 bottles hand blown, but as there were no glass blowers working in Berlin at the time, I found the only way to do them was to take ordinary wine bottles and have them manipulated, which in the end was far more interesting; it seemed to say "look how beautiful an ordinary bottle is – better than things which are 'designed'."

Doorhandle 1144, FSB, 1990

The door handle represented a big step for me, partly because it was to be mass produced and partly because I found a new way of working. In both respects. I had come to believe that it was not the designer's job to invent form, just to apply it in the right places at the right time and for good enough reasons. I had a catalogue from a company in the East End of London called W. H. Clark Ltd. who supplied equipment for trade vehicles, motorised, horse or human powered, and looking through it one day I found the direction for the door handle in the form of what was described as a coach handle. I followed up this discovery by using the form of a light bulb for the door knob, and a wing nut for the door lock. This process of not trying to invent anything while being open to outside influence was similar to the idea of adapting objects for new purposes, but more sophisticated, and somehow the economy of recycling a form seemed more rigorous than trying to invent one.



Cappellini
Universal System Catalogue
1990



FSB
Doorhandle Series
1990



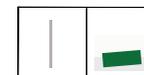
Cappellini
Universal System Catalogue (open)
1990



Cappellini
Exhibition Catalogue
1989

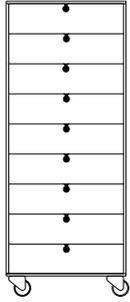


Vitra
Christmas Card
1988



Cappellini
Jasper Morrison (open)
1989

The 1990s



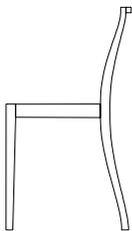
Cappellini
Universal System
1990



FSB
Catalogue
1990

Plywood Chair, Vitra, 1988

The main reason the Plywood Chair looks the way it does is that I had to make it myself, and the only equipment I had was an electric jigsaw and some “ship’s curves”. So it became a project to cut shapes out of a plywood sheet and reassemble them to make something 3-dimensional. I found that by using a thin sheet of ply for the seat and curving the cross bars below it, I could achieve a cushioning effect, which in some way compensates for other, less accommodating features. After that I did a model with the back filled in, which was more comfortable but less exciting.



Vitra
Plywood Chair
1988

Collection Vitra Design Museum



Domus
Article 1985–1988
1988

Immaculate Conception – Objects without Author, 1990

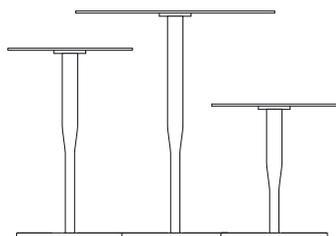
Anonymously conceived objects have been around since the first object, if there ever was one; it is only recently that ordinary, everyday objects have been identified with their creators. So what about the history and development of these modest companions? Anonymous artefacts of the distant past were anonymous because there was no concept of attaching personality to useful objects. A wheel maker might have been known locally for the exceptional quality of his work but the wheel itself was just a good wheel. Craftsmen were not held in high esteem unless their goods had value or rarity (Benvenuto Cellini). Object making was simply labour like any other kind of labour, providing a useful service to a grateful but disinterested public. Examples which contradict this theory exist only in societies of an exceptional, co-operative nature (usually native) where an act, creative or merely practical, done for the good of everyone and made without thought of financial gain, could be widely appreciated.

Anonymous objects of a more recent past have received greater appreciation. With the arrival of the industrial revolution the authorship of such products belonged, for the most part, to the inspired factory engineer or enthusiastic industrialist. These objects had a new kind of anonymity, not because people held no interest but because they were no longer handmade or unique in any way. Free to multiply, these new objects quickly threw off any nostalgic attachment to their ancestors, and in doing so invested themselves with a mysterious power: the power of identical repetition. With this power the object inhabited its own world, liberated from man’s imperfections and inefficiencies, in which it developed an “objectality” almost as distinct as a “personality”. Identifying objectality (evaluating the appeal of a thing and how useful it is to us) allows us to decide if we like or dislike an object. The character of objects with no particular parentage is quite often more appealing than the character of “pedigree” objects, where the creator’s ego may have replaced some of the object’s usefulness and even its ability to behave naturally in everyday surroundings.

More recently, anonymously conceived objects are less in evidence, or perhaps they are just evolving, occupying new territory. Household objects of low technical

sophistication, which used to be the preserve of anonymity now come only with names attached, like some new kind of packaging. Marketing executives push designers for product individuality and USPs (unique selling points) often to the detriment of a design. Less glamorous (more functional) product groups have kept alive a tradition of disinterest in promoting themselves as anything special. Anonymity is now to be found at the higher end of the technology ladder: sports equipment, electronics, vehicles, where Corporate ego outweighs personal ego and brand name is everything.

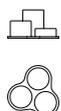
We designers are all guilty of promoting our own cause, which is only natural, but perhaps we could study and absorb some of the mysterious quality and naturalness which anonymous objects, free of their author's ego, so often have, and which is so often missing from our more self-consciously planned offerings. The value of the anonymous object is to remind us (those involved in design) that in the real world an object is just an object that depends on its long-term usefulness for survival.



Alias
Atlas System
1992
Donation Alias



JM
Invitation Gartner International
1993



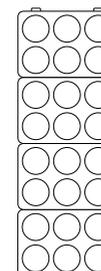
Magis
1,2,3...
1996
Donation Magis



Magis
A,B,C...
1996
Donation Magis

The House of Cappellini, 1992

Even after Memphis there was a tendency among companies exhibiting at the Milan furniture fair to display their goods as if they were sculpture. In discussion with Giulio Cappellini we came up with the idea of building an apartment called "The House of Cappellini" inside an old factory, the Fabbrica del Vapore, and arranging all the products in an appropriate setting.



Magis
Bottle
1994
Donation Magis



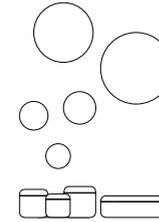
Magis
XX
1996
Donation Magis



Magis
Box
1995
Donation Magis



Alessi
Op-La
1998
Donation Alessi



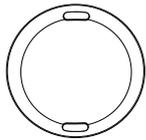
Alessi
Tin Family
1998
Donation Alessi



Ritzenhoff Crystal
Milk Glass
1992



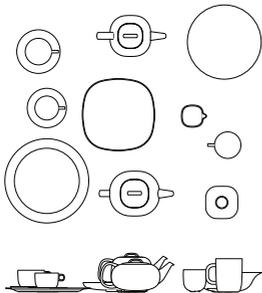
Alessi
Pepe le Moko
1998
Donation Alessi



Alessi
Op
1998
Donation Alessi

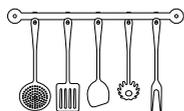


Alessi/Ormiale
Socrates Corkscrew, 1998
Ormiale bottle, 2011



Rosenthal
Moon Tableware
1997

Socrates, Alessi, 1998
I have had a corkscrew similar to this one for about twenty years. It's an old typology but a good one, which seemed to have more or less disappeared. The pantograph lever action makes it much easier to take corks out and as there are so many bad corkscrews around I decided it was my duty to reintroduce it to the world.



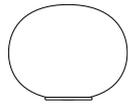
Alessi
Utensil Family
2000
Donation Alessi



Cappellini
Low Pad Chair
1999

HiFi, Sony, 1998

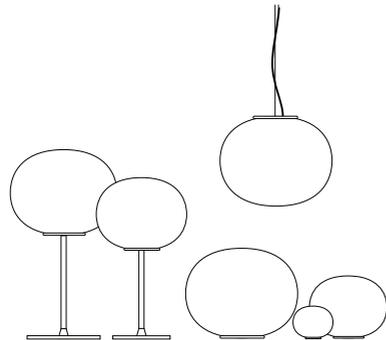
The objective of this project, designed with John Tree for Sony Europe, was to develop a top of the range family of products, from TV to HiFi. We came up with a system which allowed the HiFi to be mounted vertically on an aluminium base or simply unhooked and laid flat, in a more traditional arrangement. The sideways slot for Mini discs, inserted in the direction of the CD seemed nicely expressive of the function of recording from CD to MD. We never really discovered why the project was stopped.



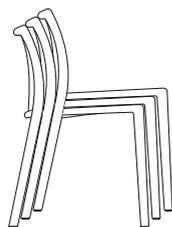
Flos
Glo-Ball
1999
Donation Flos



Cappellini
Hi Pad Chair
1999



Flos
Glo-Ball
1999
Donation Flos



Magis
Air-Chair
1999
Donation Magis

Tea pot sketches

Not every idea becomes a finished object. Looking at a watering can one day, I thought of adapting it for human use, as a tea pot. After many sketches and a final technical drawing Alessi made a prototype which we agreed was promising but not fully resolved. We tried different handles, variations of proportions, simpler ways of producing the spout but along the way we lost the plot. Sometimes it's a question of time for all the elements of a design to come together, other times it just never gets finished.

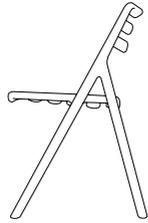


Jasper Morrison
Detail of Air-Chair Models
1999

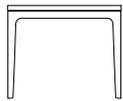


Jasper Morrison
Air Chair Section Drawings
1999

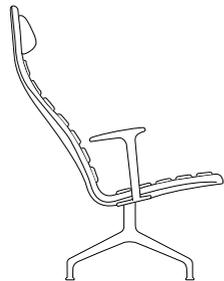
The 2000s



Magis
Folding Air-Chair
2001
Donation Magis



Vitra
Plate Table
2004



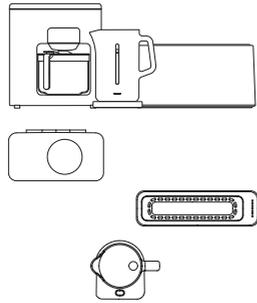
Cappellini
Lotus Lounge Chair
2006



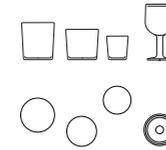
Flos
Luxmaster
2000
Flos archive

Luxmaster, Flos, 2000

The briefing from Piero Gandini at Flos was to look at designing a new adjustable uplighter, a typology made popular by Joe Colombo in the seventies, which has been off the menu for a while, due to lack of demand. The first issue we addressed was what to do with the power cable when the light is adjusted. Early proposals from Flos were to use a sprung cable winder similar to the system used on vacuum cleaners, but I didn't like the idea of housing the mechanism on the base. Thinking about the movement, I suggested using a wound cable like the ones on old telephones. Flos managed to find a cable which would keep its spring and we proceeded with the design of the head, which was originally conceived as an aluminium casting covering a reflector. Flos pushed for something with more performance suggesting a plastic housing around a cast reflector, which could be used to catch a small amount of the light and diffuse it around the back of the lamp, compensating for the blindspot and providing an improved overall quality of light. Once the basic model was resolved we adapted the design as a wall and ceiling model and made a proposal for a ceiling model on an armature. I've always disliked the central position of most ceiling light fittings and the idea of solving the problem with a rotating armature appealed to me. It allows the lighting of the room to be adjustable and makes it far more interesting.



Rowenta
Rowenta Electro-Domestic Set
2003



Alessi
Glass Family
2008
Donation Alessi



Alessi
KnifeForkSpoon
2004
Donation Alessi



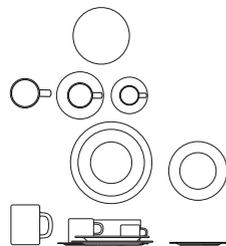
Muji
Muji Kettle
2010
Donation Muji
© RYOHIN KEIKAKU CO. LTD. - MUJI



Alessi
Pots&Pans
2006
Donation Alessi



Muji
Cutlery
2009
Donation Muji
© RYOHIN KEIKAKU CO. LTD. - MUJI



Alessi
PlateBowlCup
2008
Donation Alessi



Vitra
Cork Family
2004

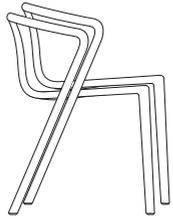


Alessi
Bowls
2000
Donation Alessi

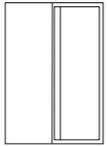
Cork Family, Vitra, 2004

Once I drove through a cork oak forest south of Seville, and from that time on I've wanted to find ways of using this remarkable waterproof, rot proof even termite proof material! The Cork Family follows an earlier project for Moooi and makes use of a pressed cork granulate made with the waste material of the wine bottle cork stopper business. I see them used as small side tables beside low chairs, but most people seem to think they are stools.

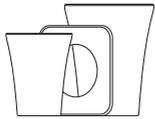
The 2010s



Magis
Air-Armchair
2005
Donation Magis



Established & SONS
Crate
2006



Magis
Trash
2005
Donation Magis



Magis
Pipe Armchair
2008
Donation Magis



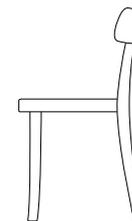
Punkt
Alarm Clock and Telephone
2010
Donation Punkt



Punkt.
Poster
2010



Punkt.
Booklet
2010



Vitra
Basel chair
2008



Muji
 Wall clock
 2007
 Donation Muji
 © RYOHIN KEIKAKU CO. LTD. - MUJI



Vitra
 HAL Armchair
 2011–2015



Vitra
 Cork Bowl
 2005
 Donation Vitra



Ando Gallery
 Ando's Glass
 2014



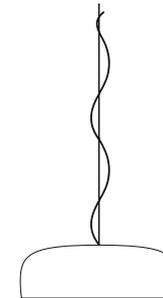
Cappellini
 Bac chair
 2005



Vitra
 Rise Table
 2014



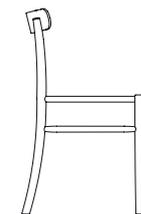
Vitra
 HAL Chair
 2011–2015



Flos
 Smithfield
 2006
 Donation Flos



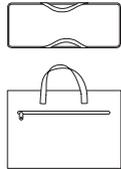
Vitra
 HAL Chair
 2011–2015



Maruni
 Lightwood Chair
 2011



Vitra
Rotary Tray
2014



Maharam
Scamp Bag
2013
Donation Maharam



Camper
Country Trainer
2010



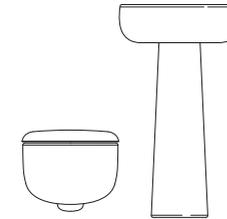
Muji
Saucepans
2014
Donation Muji
© RYOHIN KEIKAKU CO. LTD. - MUJI



Marsotto
Toulouse table
2012
Donation Marsotto



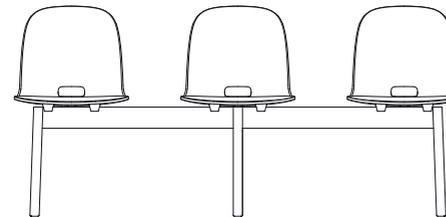
Nikari
December Chair
2012



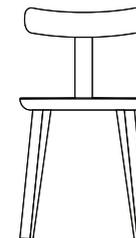
Flaminia
Bonola Bathroom Ceramics
2012
Donation Flaminia



Emeco
Alfi
2014
Donation Emeco



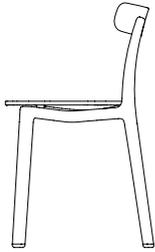
Emeco
Alfi Bench
2014
Donation Emeco



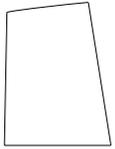
Maruni
T
2016



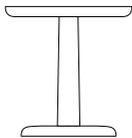
Oigen
Palma Cookware
2012



Vitra
APC
2016



Muji
Stool
2016



Fredericia
Pon
2016

Programme of Events (in German)

Every Sunday, 2 pm: bauhaus_tour
Combined tour of “Jasper Morrison:
Thingness” and “Bauhaus in Motion”,
free with admission to the museum

Tuesday, 21 Mar, 6 pm: bauhaus_members
Preview of the exhibition with
curator Sibylle Hoiman, followed by
the official opening beginning at 7 pm,
booking: mitglieder@bauhaus.de

Sunday, 26 Mar, 3 pm: bauhaus_barrier_free
Barrier-free tour of the exhibition,
free with museum admission, booking:
visit@bauhaus.de

Sunday, 23 Apr, 21 May, 18 June, 17 Sep, 15 Oct,
11 am – 2 pm: bauhaus_family
Family workshop, open to children
aged 5 and up: children €6, adults €9,
materials €3, booking:
info@jugend-im-museum.de

Sunday, 30 Apr, 25 June, 8 Oct,
11 am: bauhaus_brunch
Brunch, admission and guided tour
of the exhibition: €22, members €17,
booking: visit@bauhaus.de

Thursday, 18 May, 7 pm: bauhaus_special
Lecture “Den Alltag gestalten” (Designing
everyday life) by Grit Weber (curator at
the Museum Angewandte Kunst,
Frankfurt am Main), followed by the
awarding of the IKEA Stiftung’s
annual design prize, free admission,
booking required: visit@bauhaus.de

Monday to Friday, 24–28 July,
10 am – 3 pm: , bauhaus_vacation
Workshop “Designing Lamps and
Textiles”, for children aged 8 and up,
course fee €70 + material fee €10,
for further information and booking:
info@jugend-im-museum.de

Monday to Friday, 28 Aug – 1 Sept,
9 am – 2 pm: bauhaus_vacation
Workshop “A House for Everyone –
Stackable and Serial Worlds”, for children
aged 8 and up, course fee €70 + material
fee €8, for further information and
booking: info@jugend-im-museum.de

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www.bauhaus.de

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U Nollendorfplatz
Bus M29, 100, 106 and
187, stop: Lützowplatz

Opening times:
Daily, except Tues., 10 am — 5 pm
Also open: Tues., 18 April.,
6 June, 3 Oct: 10 am — 5 pm

Design: Sebastian Fehr

Exhibition design and coordination:
Michel Charlot and
Jasper Morrison Studio

The exhibition was realised in cooperation
with Jasper Morrison and the CID
(Grand-Hornu, Belgium).

