

THE TOP 15 FROM:

MILAN DESIGN WEEK

The greatest furniture event on Earth was once again chock-full of visual wonders and breathtaking displays. Here are some of the highlights that made this year one to remember BY CATHERINE OSBORNE

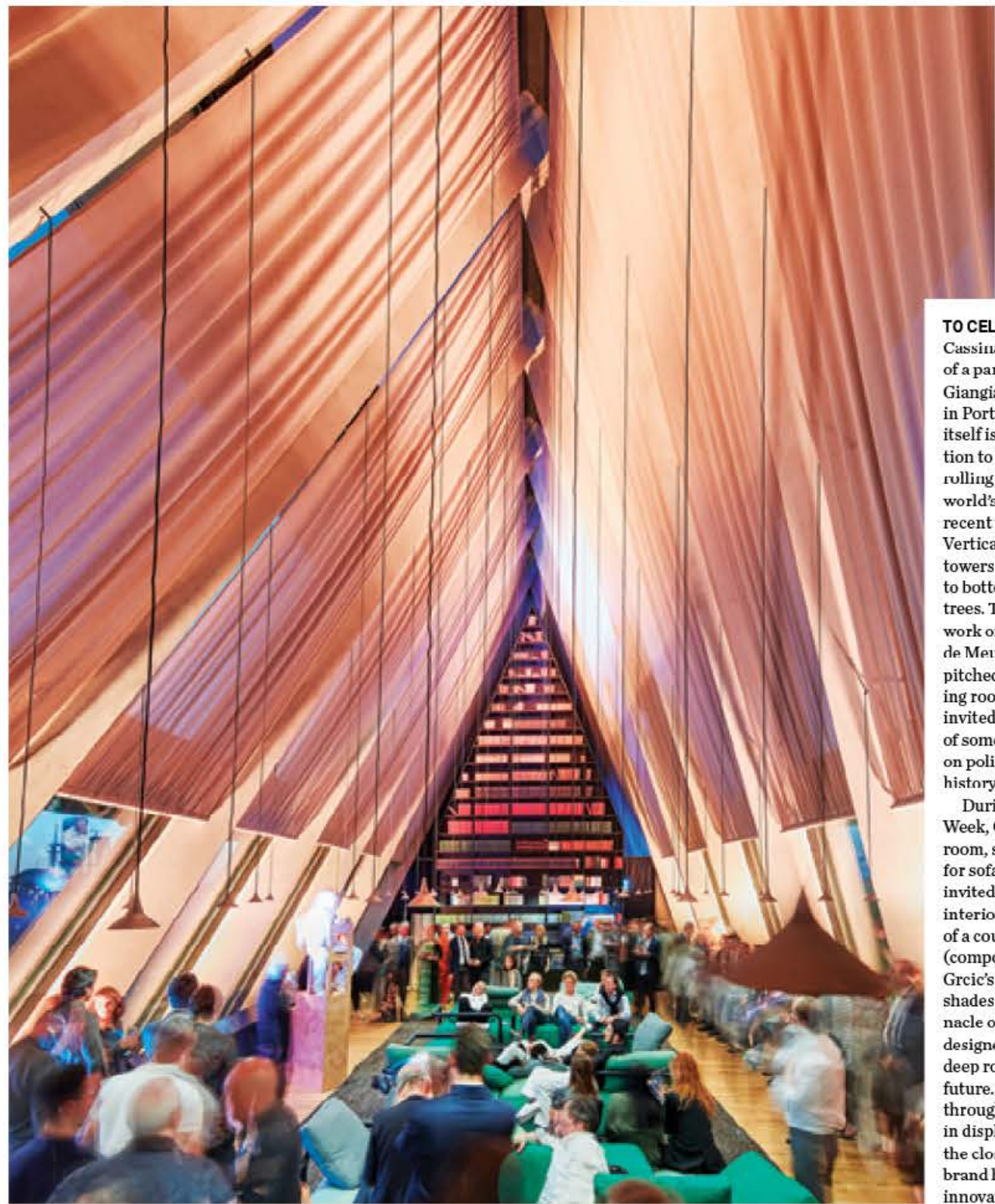
MILAN DESIGN WEEK is a trove for unearthing trends, but this year what stood out most was creative expression that seems impressively free of any collective likemindedness. The order of the day was more about standing out. One installation that captured this best came from New York architecture firm Diller Scofidio + Renfro, who hung a canopy made from 300 pairs of air-filled jeans across a large courtyard. The web of pants was held together by clips that attached belt loops to belt loops and cuffs to cuffs. Liz Diller and her team chose jeans as a way to give human scale to the space, but the canopy, called Off The Cuff, read as the ultimate in freewheeling invention and experimentation. And on a reasonable budget, no less.

1 Flow Bowl side table by Nendo for Alias. 2 Atere outdoor sofa by Plust. 3 Blau lounge chair in anthracite, by Gandia Blasco.



THE LONG NECK CHAIR

Swedish studio Färg & Blanche's one-off chair for flooring company Rolon is upholstered in a textile made from a combination of vinyl and metallized polyester. The material forms a bootle-like shell for the back and is stitched to a thermoplastic polyester felt layer that lines the inside of the backrest.



TO CELEBRATE ITS 90TH, Cassina threw one heck of a party at the Fondazione Giangiacomo Feltrinelli in Porta Volta. The building itself is a remarkable addition to a city that has been rolling out some of the world's best landmarks in recent years, including Bosco Verticale, two residential towers that are covered top to bottom with over 800 trees. The Fondazione is the work of Swiss firm Herzog & de Meuron, and its steeply pitched roof shelters a reading room where scholars are invited to explore an archive of some 250,000 volumes on politics, social sciences, history and economics.

During Milan Design Week, Cassina took over the room, swapping out desks for sofas. Visitors were then invited to take in the dramatic interior from the comfort of a couch. The installation (composed of Konstantin Grcic's Soft Props sofas in shades of green) was the pinnacle of a larger exhibition, designed to reveal Cassina's deep roots in shaping the future. Visitors wandered through the building taking in displays that illustrated the close ties the Italian brand has always had with innovation. However, one only had to peek inside Refuge Tonneau, a space-shuttle-shaped portable mountain shelter originally designed in 1938 by Charlotte Perriand and Pierre Jeanneret, for evidence of Cassina's fascination with pioneering design.



4 Colette outdoor armchair by Minotti. **5** Boutique Botero sofa by Marcel Wanders for Moooi. **6** Green Light shelving system by Olafur Eliasson for Moroso.



THE BE BOP CHAIR

From design duo Ludovica and Roberto Palomba, Be Bop combines various influences, from mid-century modernism to African traditionalism. The Kartell chair may look like it is made of wood, but it is actually moulded plastic.



VENTURA CENTRALE is the newest area of Milan to claim itself as a design district, comprising eight disused train station warehouses that make for dramatic backdrops. Lee Broom used a derelict vault on the site's grounds to set up Time Machine, an illuminated carousel. In lieu of wooden horses, the merry-go-round featured a selection of the products the British designer has created since launching his own brand a decade ago. His meteoric career includes lines of furniture and lighting, including the Hanging Hoop chair, Crystal Bulb pendants and a Persian carpet-covered sideboard. Each reimaged in a unifying white-on-white palette, the exhibition was a marvel to behold.



THE DROUGHT CHAIR

We+ of Tokyo embedded balls of resin into wax to create the heavily dimpled effect of Drought, a chair that evokes the cracked earth that appears after months without water. Once the resin dried, the resulting wax form was used to create a mould to cast the bronze chair. The studio spent five months developing the technique.



7 Grek Box by Gabriele and Oscar Buratti for Living Divani. **8** Brixx outdoor collection by Dedon. **9** You armchair by Luca Nichetto for Coedition. **10** Cabaré table by Flexform.

