

RETRO

How to bring back the authenticity of industrial culture into our digital offices? By creating a strong contrast and an interesting balance between today's office norms and the allure of the great classics, allowing terms like 'vintage' and 'second-hand' to be part of the play. Offices are seen sporting identity and history, filled with objects that are meaningful to them and their branch of business.



ECKART MAISE

Chief Design Officer at Vitra

In late-2014 Vitra presented the Prouvé RAW Office Edition. Following the success of the Prouvé RAW crossover project between Vitra and G-Star RAW in 2011, the partnership continued with the development, producing this second collection: a series of furniture pieces and lighting originally designed by Jean Prouvé in the 1940s for the offices of major French industrial companies. Prouvé's constructive logic and strict utilisation of honest industrial materials not only corresponds to the product philosophy of G-Star but also exhibits a strong affinity with the architecture of the brand's new headquarters, built in 2014 by architect Rem Koolhaas. Thus, it was only sensible to furnish the offices of the new building with designs originally created by Jean Prouvé some 70 years ago. But how did the fashion brand happen to fit into the Vitra design process? Eckart Maise revealed some clues. "Vitra and G-Star share a passion for Prouvé's designs. It is a collaboration based on content; the discussions are entirely about understanding Prouvé's work and about how to give it a contemporary expression. The marketing and co-branding aspects were secondary, even though they were important during the project's roll-out. The desks and chairs were designed decades ago, but they still meet the modern needs of office environments in terms of functionality. In addition, they are unique in terms of their aesthetics and cultural value. The Prouvé pieces bring the authenticity of industrial culture back into our digital offices once again, creating a strong contrast and an interesting balance at the same time." The collaboration offers some rare insights into the merging of two creative teams and a family heritage: "The creative team at G-Star Raw are huge fans of Jean Prouvé's furniture, they have a detailed knowledge of his works. This seriousness is paired with an open-minded creative approach. As a third partner, Jean Prouvé's family took part in the project. Together, we decided early-on to leave the construction and materials as close as possible to the original. We only made slight changes in order to meet today's office norms. The main work was on the colours, finishes, and details."

vitra.com
g-star.com
Portrait, photo: Bettina Matthiessen, © Vitra



LUCIE KOLDOVÁ

Designer

Czech lighting and furniture designer Lucie Koldová, now based in Paris, presented a writing desk this past spring called Sheets, which exhibits a classically pristine look. "This writing desk reminds one of the blank sheets of paper waiting for the first sentences to fill their lines. Elegant proportions, with gentle curves and an attractive combination of boldly coloured legs and wooden surfaces, defines the look. Two softly-shaped composite sheets of veneered plywood, the upper plane levitating above the larger one, create enough space between them for storing necessities such as pens, a laptop, or a keyboard. It seems as though the table was designed for the writing of love correspondences or for the exchange of exciting electronic conversation, but it can equally well serve as a dressing table in a lady's boudoir..."

luciekoldova.com



HAY

Iskos-Berlin

Soft Edge, the chair series designed by Iskos-Berlin for Hay in 2015, represents the next step in the development of the moulded plywood technique. Using regular veneers, it provides significantly bigger double curvature in order to obtain three-dimensionality, which is unusual for ordinary moulded plywood. "In a way, Soft Edge is a kind of a hybrid between the Gubi chair's sculptural form and the democratic rationality of Børge Mogensen's chairs", say the designers at Iskos-Berlin.

iskos-berlin.dk
hay.dk



WE DO WOOD

We Do Wood has introduced **Field Desk**, a flexible home office workstation designed to occupy a minimal amount of space while still allowing for the storage of office essentials such as laptops and magazines. The table can easily be disassembled when required, due to specially designed brackets.

wedowood.dk

