



Autoban

Form. Function. Experience.

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By Marie Le Fort

“Let’s Head for the Highway!”

...in Turkish, “Otobana çıkalım!”, was for years Seyhan und Sefer’s magical sentence: for them it meant “let’s escape.”

“Let’s free ourselves, clean our mind, and clear our vision. Let’s take the easy, steady way to head to somewhere new.” They were drawn by the idea of driving somewhere together, and they loved the visual systems of highways: the forms, the graphics, the typography, and universal design aesthetics.” For them, Autoban (derived from the Turkish “otoban”) symbolized it all.

Founded in 2003, Autoban’s story is quintessentially rooted in this feeling of freedom, of driving in the same direction towards a brighter horizon. But where did this German touch and highway metaphor come from? one might be tempted to ask.

If their success seems exceptional today, there were times when they first met, in 1995, when Seyhan and Sefer had nothing but their ideas, a few tools, and sleepless nights to make their dreams happen. Freshly graduated in architecture and design from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University in 1998, they had a strong background in German architecture. “The university was full of German architects back in the 1950s: our teachers were educated by them and still conditioned by their strong philosophy. We were taught as ‘children of the Bauhaus’ and gained a lot from it,” the duo recalls. Five years down the road, in 2003, Seyhan and Sefer had grown closer. Impatient and eager, their energy was directed towards the same goals and their thinking was mutually beneficial. It was time to look for a name for their studio: “We put together a list of the strangest names. We were sure of one thing though: we were not going to use the words

‘Design Studio’ and wanted our name to cross boundaries. We already had in mind to reach out to the international design scene, to be heard and understood as well as to share a common language,” Seyhan recalls. “Why don’t you call yourselves Otoban?” asked a friend, who was obviously in the know of their secret motto “Otobana çıkalım!”.

At first they were perplexed; they quickly looked up the English word in the dictionary—it was too difficult to pronounce in Turkish—but then the German “Autobahn” popped up. It seemed obvious that using the German word would link Bauhaus influences back into their work and perfectly fit the purpose. In addition, they remembered how much they loved Kraftwerk’s album *Autobahn* (1974): “Signs are a language of their own. They don’t need to be translated. They are efficient. Their message is stronger than words; you just have to follow the icons,” they explain. Seyhan and Sefer decided to personalize the word Autobahn without the H. “We knew the road ahead would be as fast as in real life; that we would have to make many choices and take care to always follow the rules. We knew our path would be defined by the choice we made. We were ready to drive fast.” Autoban was born.

A unique vision, two strong personalities
Seyhan Özdemir is definitely an oddball. Even for her loyal business partner Efe Aydar, who has been on board since 2004—Efe started as an interior designer before stepping up as an associate in 2007, a general



Photo: Sergio Ghetti

manager in 2009, and a partner in 2011. A close friend of the duo, he draws an original picture of Seyhan: “Designers are still afraid to confess their complicated lives. She’s not. In many ways, the world of a designer is chaotic: while sticking to a daily routine, there is a fundamental need to stay on the edge. On the one hand, there are staff, tax, and rent issues that need to be addressed, along with the never-ending coffee-machine problems! On the other, there are clients pressing for new designs, as if the world could be reinvented overnight in a few drawings. With humor and a fresh mind-set, Seyhan always manages to both anchor daily management and free creativity to provoke new settings. There is something magnetic about watching her calmly thrive.” That is surely the mark of a great talent.

If, for her part, Seyhan started to walk at 10 months old and read numbers when she was four, Sefer broke his toys into small parts in order to enjoy reassembling the perfectly. A born leader, Seyhan was always “quick as a highway,” always ready to implement new ideas and keep an open-minded spirit. For his part, Sefer was perceived as a (practical) daydreamer always absorbed by detail-solving. His eye even caught all the furniture details of any movie he watched. Little Seyhan played with Lego to build bridges, or crushed appliances to understand how they worked. That was when she wasn’t devouring books—she spent all her pocket money on books, and tried to finish one a week—or asking too many questions in class. Her curiosity and reactivity were already annoying. Sefer, in contrast, seems like an icon of patience. Like a claire-obscure, they obviously complement

one another. Based on trust and understanding, their organic partnership has enabled them to balance creativity, commerce, and culture over time, in (practically) all circumstances.

The road to success

From the start, there was one thing Seyhan and Sefer were absolutely sure about: they wanted to show abroad and be designers—although they also had talents for architecture and interiors. Their goal was to be part of the international scene. So when they set up shop in a tiny studio in Galata in 2003, the first plywood collection they designed had to be a statement. “It still influences us today, and the Bergère chair remains amongst our favorite pieces,” says Seyhan. Looking back, these first toddler’s steps were for real.

Soon after, their first project called Sedir, in Ortaköy, set the grounds of their design philosophy: inside an old Greek house, they started to play around and reinterpret the traditional Turkish *kahve* chair: “We found one, reproduced it, and modernized it by using a pallet of Greek colors. We also turned the coffee shop’s tables into our Starfish table,” Seyhan recalls. With a very limited budget, the duo further decided to keep the rough walls intact, and they created a lighting fixture using readily available spare parts and mixing them together. This first boutique project set the basis of their rough-lux aesthetics: that is, keeping original features, working hand in hand with local manufacturers, respecting

Istanbul's heritage and contrasts, and mixing ancient and modern to compose a singular, timeless language.

It wasn't long before Seyhan and Sefer stepped out of their boundaries to show at the Salon du Meuble in Paris in January 2004. As a first event, they could have chosen better, but they were granted a young-designer corner of their own. They exhibited the Spider Lamp and the Sleepy rocking chair, complete with well-designed postcards, pins, and small catalogues. Their first encounter with the international press came as a lucky charm in the person of Alex Bagner, design critic for *Wallpaper**. Later that year, they received a phone call from the leading British design magazine, telling them they had been selected for the best newcomers awards. Seyhan remembers being ecstatic. The call set their unknown design studio flying. Yet it came with a logistics issue: it was Monday, and the duo was required to come to the photo-shoot on the following Friday. "We had no visa, and it was difficult back then to get one overnight," Seyhan recalls. "I was upset." Eager to make it happen, she came up with a solution—it could have been a trip to the moon, she would have found a way to be there! Featured as Best Young Designers Under 30 (among a handful of other European designers) in the January 2005 issue of the magazine, Autoban instantly started existing outside Turkey. In parallel, Autoban was recognized as a trendsetter in its own country.

The same year Autoban attended 100% Design in London, and was quickly awarded a grant as best new comers. Again, their modernist inspired aesthetics and wooden products such as the Bergère chair were visionary in an era best known for its bling-bling attitude and loud favorites.

If Seyhan and Sefer shipped their furniture ahead, they brought every element of scenography on the plane with them: "We had been working

on designing the House Café Ortaköy and using patterns on the café's concrete columns and decided to print a vast tarpaulin with such patterns to give texture to the stand." Back then, even at a trade fair, layering and giving texture were already pillars of Autoban's design aesthetics. Not only winners of the young-designer grant, Seyhan and Sefer also came home with a *Wallpaper** design recognition.

Looking back ten years, it is easy to see how spot on their designs were: a decade later, they are still forward thinking and up to date in terms of trends. It wasn't long before Autoban would be copied and their style referred to as a design classic.

Gentle Roughness

In 2004, a project inside Istanbul's historical Mısır Apartmenti came around as another breakthrough in Autoban's style. Called Loft, it was designed for the House Café owner Ramazan, who collects sneakers and street finds, making it easy for Seyhan and Sefer to share a common culture. Inside the century-old building, the duo transformed a derelict cafeteria into an open living space, keeping the memory of the place and respecting its historical layering while adding a contemporary design touch to it. "We uncovered the cheap brick wall, and put the emphasis, visually, on the electrical circuit we added to give the space an industrial feel. We paired an old washbasin we found in a warehouse in Karaköy with the tiles we had saved from the old kitchen area. We imprinted a honeycomb structure onto the plywood floor and kept the "dirty" ceiling intact to respect the place's heritage. Chairs came from second-hand shops or were found on the streets; I even rescued an original Herman Miller fiberglass chair that the German Hospital was about to discard," Seyhan remembers. Loft was Autoban's first signature project, and not only was it instantly picked up by the international press and featured in *Elle Décor's* "Best Houses" issue, but it became a hype factor inside

the local scene. From the moment the creative circles saw Loft, they were drawn to this aesthetic and wanted to live in the same settings. Further down the road, the trend would be picked up by many artists and trendsetters; from that moment on, Autoban's style would be referred to, in their own city, as paramount.

A cosmopolitan urban life

In the first six years of the studio's life, Seyhan and Sefer worked on approximately 250 projects, which ranged in scale from the smallest neighborhood café to a chain of hotels that bridges the gap between the historical nature of the buildings and contemporary aesthetics. The duo also recently developed elegant, free-flowing interiors for Baku's gigantic new airport, due to open in early 2014. If the projects vary greatly in style, they were all "a rare opportunity to try many things, experiment with spaces, materials, and layers while developing our own codes," says the duo. If Autoban engaged with a wide range of patterns, forms, crafts, or historical influences over different periods of time, each and every one of them was about structure and function, experience and modern urban life.

"We embrace cosmopolitan attitudes; furthermore, we strongly feel that we always need to stay in touch with city life, with its traveling elite, neighborhood joints, and people who go out. This challenges our habits and helps us foster self-improvement through design".

If composing contemporary interiors for the House Café chain acted as a launch pad in 2005, imagining a couture house for fashion empire Vakko in 2006 or drawing inspiration from Scandinavian mid-century modern classics to craft the interiors of Sakıp Sabancı Museum's restaurant Müzedeçanga—which won a *Wallpaper** design award the

same year—further helped them to dive into a cosmopolitan vision of their own city. Spreading their wings in many directions, Seyhan and Sefer not only developed high-end retail spaces and luxury cafés, but also opened their own gallery space or set up a healthy collaboration with the Portuguese manufacturer De La Espada to distribute their designs throughout the world. "We tried everything during those years: we needed to find ways to diversify while staying true to our design language. Every project we came across we approached like a laboratory; these experimental years were the most creative," they recall. In 2008, with the bakery chain Komşufırın, their first designer Witt Suites Hotel İstanbul or modernized local neighborhood favorite Karaköy Lokantası, Autoban started testing a more refined perception of space that gentrified, in a way, the cosmopolitan urban scene.

2009 came as a turning point as Autoban moved into their new offices in Beyoğlu, down the street from the Pera Palace. It became obvious that they were ready to embrace larger architectural projects. The same year, they finalized their first Hong Kong restaurant: named 208 Duecento Otto, it revisited the Italian trattoria atmosphere by applying Chinese-inspired Delft-blue ceramic tiles in the walls. Their cosmopolitan style had reached a climax. Soon after, to convey their world vision, Turkish Airlines commissioned Autoban with the design of their international departures lounge. "Thinking cosmopolitan" had simply become the anchor of Autoban's language. Seyhan and Sefer were ready for anything that would come from far away and as a challenge!

Form follows function follows experience

Autoban consider it their ultimate design formula: "Form follows Function, follows Experience." It therefore comes as no surprise then form, function, and urban experience are three key words in Autoban's

design grammar. “As designers brought up and still living in this city, we had the chance to experiment with a melting pot of civilizations that thrives on two opposite architectural and social anchors: a great loyalty to historical richness and a colossal excitement for modernization”, Seyhan and Sefer explain.

It is in this exceptional context that Autoban generates “design stories,” very much like a film director. First, they design every single element that will be part of the scenario; then they go to great lengths to customize them to fit into a broader design perspective. Through a layered process, the duo focuses on the micro- and macro-expansion of forms to make sure that design fits into the story and becomes a tangible part of it. With every project, design is linked to the final experience, which loops back to design itself.

One of the best examples in their extensive portfolio of works would be Turkish Airlines’ CIP Lounge, for which the initial intention was to create a “contemporary Turkish experience.” Inspired by the elegant domes of İstanbul, erected by the Ottoman architect Sinan, Autoban created a totally new design experience: featuring interior domes and portals, the lounge offers passageways and unique entertainment areas that push the visitor to systematically explore the grounds. It also redefines the boundaries of the airport lounge, setting new, ground-breaking standards.

Scenography

In Autoban’s language, scenography is an underlying principle. In fact, part of their philosophy is to approach any volume as if it were a set: whether Seyhan and Sefer put the emphasis on creating a structure within the space or exaggerating its proportion to create a theatrical stage, every new décor bears an element of surprise.

“Interiors are like a movie for us,” they claim. Composing a set—or a “shell” as Sefer calls it—is a leitmotiv in Autoban’s work: once they have analyzed the direct environment, questioned the nature and heritage of the walls, they come up with a contemporary installation-like idea.

For example, the retro-lit honeycomb structures on the ceilings of the House Hotel Galatasaray brilliantly echo the patterns of the old ceramic tiles; by doing so, the crisp light and edgy motifs project the listed building’s volumes into the 21st century. Inside the House Café İstinye Park (voted Europe’s best shopping mall), wood and marble tables are literally caged in dome-shaped metal frameworks. Sitting under these elegant cages—which mimic the glass pavilions of fin-de-siècle universal exhibitions and at first sight resemble illustrations—one has the impression of sitting outdoor within this covered environment. A rather luxurious feeling inside a shopping mall. In Kanyon, another House Café has a rib-like steel structure, which recreates the sensation of a greenhouse. Looking into Autoban’s line of products, the Nest chair again captures this idea of staging space with its hooded profile. For Autoban, scenography is like a blank canvas they can easily apply to any project.

Hand crafted. Respecting the Hand behind

Seyhan and Sefer like to repeat that the first factor in every design project is human. The same applies for the hand behind every product: “We’ve been collaborating with one of our carpenters from the very early stages. He helped us on our first project back when we were freelance architects and designers, and still at university!” they recall, laughing. “He was young like us, and had set up a tiny upholstery shop my

father used to work with,” Sefer explains. “Back then, our first designs were so important to us that when we came up to him with the concept for our first sofa it felt like we had built a space shuttle! We would go to see him everyday and literally drive him crazy. He was always so attentive to the general structure as well as the smallest details that we developed many of our prototypes with him, and still run to him when we have an idea for a new product,” they further explain.

Among their dedicated family of craftsmen, they also mention their carpenter. “It’s always the same with him: first, he gives a close look at our designs and says ‘It’s never going to work!’ It’s a private joke between us now. Yet he remains the best at challenging any design we bring him and fine-tuning it,” Sefer says, remembering how applying a thin layer of textile inside the Bergère chair’s wooden structure made a seamless connection with the upholstered element.

At Autoban, it is a philosophy: the final piece is always a crafted object made by local producers with meticulous attention to detail. There is no mass production involved here!

And this is probably why the design company has kept such a strong identity over a decade: “In Turkey, the smaller manufacturers are beginning to realize the importance of designers, yet the country’s wealth of manufacturers isn’t interested in home talent. Young designers have to use the city’s heritage of craftsmen and artisans to get pieces made, and junk or found objects as raw material,” an ICON journalist explains in an extensive article on the duo. “Ironically, the lack of manufacturing support for Turkish designers has been Autoban’s greatest advantage. If one of the country’s manufacturers had been interested in working with the duo, it is unlikely that their distinctive detailing would have survived intact, and that their body of work would have the same character and coherence. With affordable craftsmen on their doorstep, Autoban

has enjoyed the luxury of quality and control other European designers dream of. Working with local wood, metal, and glass specialists, they have been able to develop their ideas at the craftsmen’s workshops and oversee every detail.”

Patterns

Patterns are to Autoban what rhythm is to music. They are everything to them: a way to refine the décor, to create or emphasis perspectives, to increase volumes. “By using patterns, we can deepen the perception of space, add richness to it,” the duo explains.

Whether there are back-lit geometrical cabinets at restaurant Münferit or wooden panels at newly designed Gaspar, İznik-inspired tile arrangements at Karaköy Lokantası or honeycomb structures at the House Hotel Galatasaray, patterns are a significant element in Autoban’s design language. “Patterns challenge the space. They create movement; they visually pull out and press in,” Seyhan points out. Patterns are meticulously used in every project: from oversized to minute, they add a graphic layer and play on different scales. Whether they are neo-Ottoman or kinetic, minimal or gilded, they texturize any kind of surface. “Patterns are part of the Turkish culture: when you visit the Topkapı Palace, and especially the harem quarters, you find graphic rhythm on the floor, in the tiles, in the walls. In every material used, really.” And part of this “pattern magic” historically relies on an extensive use of marble in Turkey. “We always felt very close to marble; when you look at it closely, it almost feels like a living organism. Its complexity is such that it offers an infinite combination of layering. In Turkey, we are very lucky: we have access to any kind of marble, from beige to ocher, pink to green. With intricate veins or a cloudy structure. In every project,

marble can be used as a solid architectural element, but also as a pattern or mood. The finish also conveys a lot in terms of culture and style: we'll always choose a mat or polished concrete-like finish over a shiny, reflective aesthetic. If readily accessible and rather cheap, the most important thing for us is that we still have great craftsmen who can pretty much do anything with marble," the duo comments. Carved out of white marble from Afyon—Turkey's capital for marble—a limited edition of Autoban's four-meter-long Pebble table was unveiled during the *Block* exhibition in İstanbul. Streaked with intense blackened veins, it stood out as a sculptural piece with ever-changing perspectives.

Working in İstanbul, with one foot in Europe and one foot in Asia, certainly highlights the scope for inspiration and motifs from Autoban's point of view: the multiplicity of identities simply makes it more diverse than anywhere else in Europe.

Layers of textures and influences

In Autoban's unique language, the relation between structure, form, and material is crucial. From locally crafted iron railings to colorful slabs of marble or custom-made Delft-blue ceramics retracing back to their Chinese origins for a restaurant in Hong Kong, materials have a way of composing sets. Telling a story. But what they highlight in the very first place are layers: "We were always interested in layers. They are the living memories of an existing building. So any project starts with questioning existing layers and creating new ones. The combinations are infinite," say Seyhan and Sefer. And this approach is strongly linked to their upbringing and close environment: back in the 18th and 19th centuries, Galata and Pera were neighborhoods where Europeans lived, admired by the İstanbul elites. Invited by Ottoman leaders, European architects and artists were well accepted: wall-paintings influenced the patterns used in mosques, while new motifs and techniques appeared.

Slowly but surely, the Ottoman culture and the European style merged into a new hybrid. No wonder Seyhan and Sefer first set up shop in the heart Beyoğlu Bridging the gap between two epochs, their studio unfolds, behind the historic façade of a 1830s Union Française building, as a beautiful, marble-floored townhouse. In the main creative studio, the wooden framework has been kept intact, highlighting exquisite window shapes. Lying on the shelves there are books on Adolph Loos, Carlo Scarpa and Carlo Mollino, but also Anish Kapoor or Gerhard Richter. If Seyhan and Sefer quote Charles and Ray Eames as their greatest influence, one can also trace back real Scandinavian influences in their work, from the process to the form. Looking at the Bergère, designed in the very early years of their practice, the use of plywood recalls the experiments Alvar Aalto made in Finland decades back. Woody—a leather-upholstered chair supported by structural wooden lines—is yet another example of this influence: the chair remains a crafted object made by local producers with meticulous attention to detail.

Even though their extensive product line is sold by the Portuguese manufacturer De La Espada, there is no mass production at Autoban. And although he remains quite secretive, Sefer's upbringing and family background plays a crucial role here: first, his great-grandfather worked as a stonemason in Niğde (central Anatolia) in the 1930s, building houses using local marble quarries; then, while in elementary and middle school, Sefer rushed after school to his father's upholsterer shop to lend a hand as an apprentice. To this day, his father still refers to him drawing illustrations on the back of furniture skeletons before they were upholstered. Sefer further experienced a passion for materials during his industrial vocational studies prior to university.

As far back as Sefer can recall, İstiklal street and the many elegant buildings around it were designed by French and Italian architects; from his childhood in Cihangir, he remembers the many details and proportions

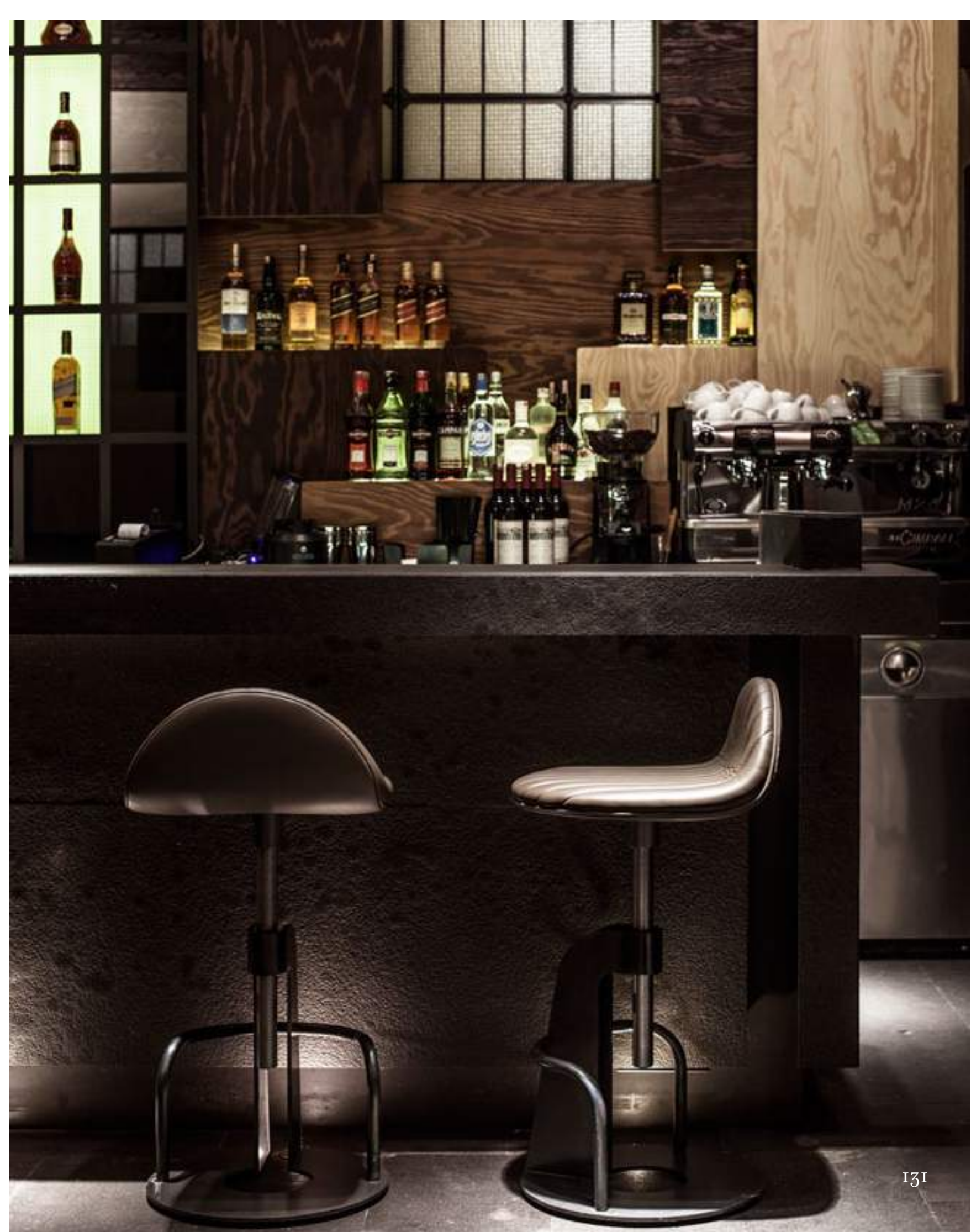
of each one of them from the door knobs and grand entrances to the sash windows and ceiling ornamentations. This fascination for layers and memories of existing buildings definitely roots back to Sefer's early years.

Insisting on past decades while revealing timeless patterns became part of Autoban's creative DNA, as if they made it compulsory to highlight historical layers and add new ones. "Today, we still work around, create, and question the layers before starting to design. Then we challenge them to add depth and perspective to the space,"

Seyhan explains, walking to her home, a block behind her office. Inside the narrow passageway that leads to the front door, she explains that this building is home to artists' studios, film directors, and Uykusuz, a comic book that literally means "never sleeps" in Turkish. She likes the effervescence of Tuesday evenings when the weekly comic book is being wrapped. Past the door, an old electric panel she recovered makes a first statement, adding layering and texture to the dark entrance. The rest unfolds with muted elegance: the roughness of the old walls, the intensive detailing, the use of patterns to increase the perspectives, the anachronisms of the old merging with the new, the contemporary artworks facing well-crafted timeless furniture ... everything is there, in perfect Autoban style.



GASPAR













TURKISH AIRLINES
CIP LOUNGE







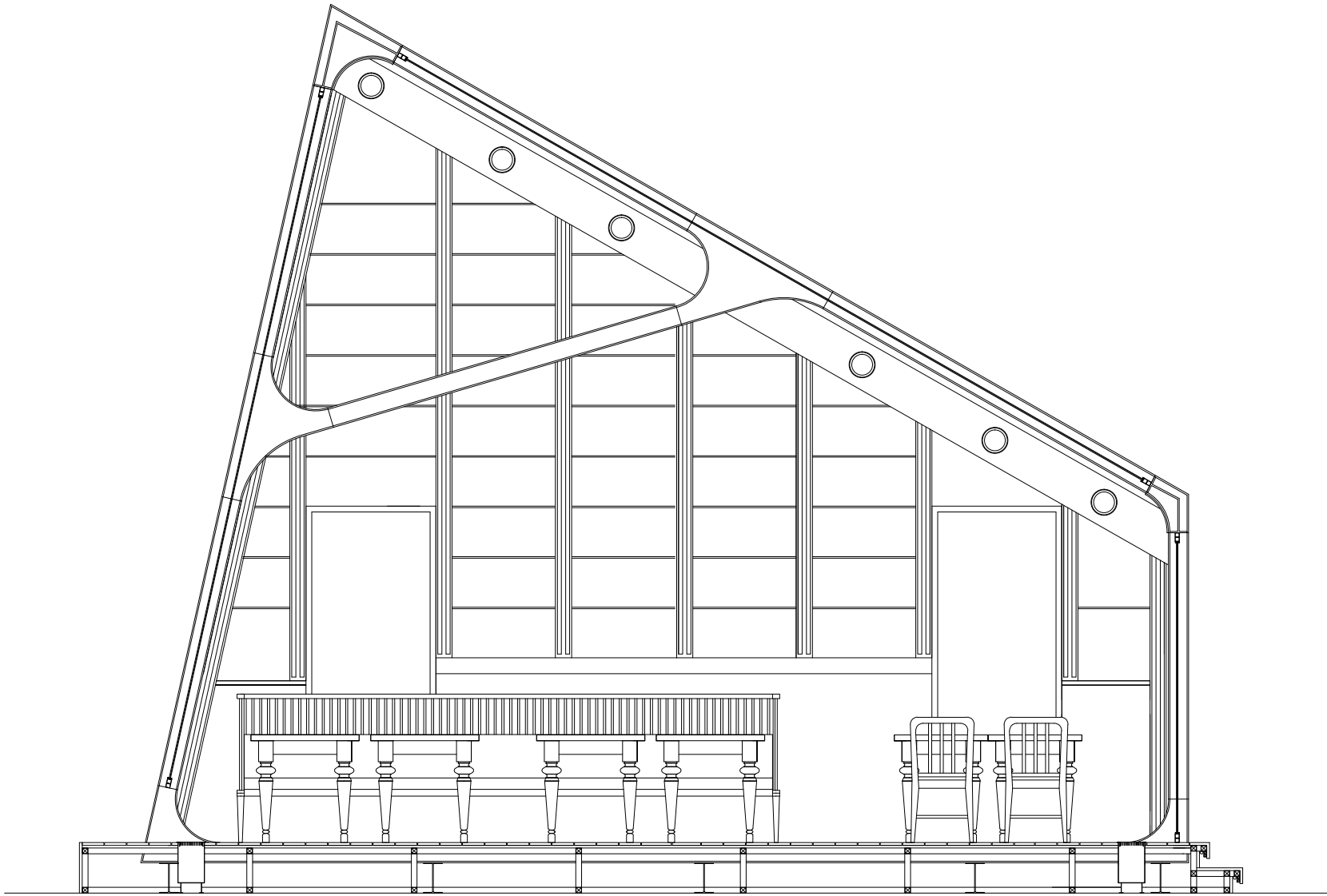












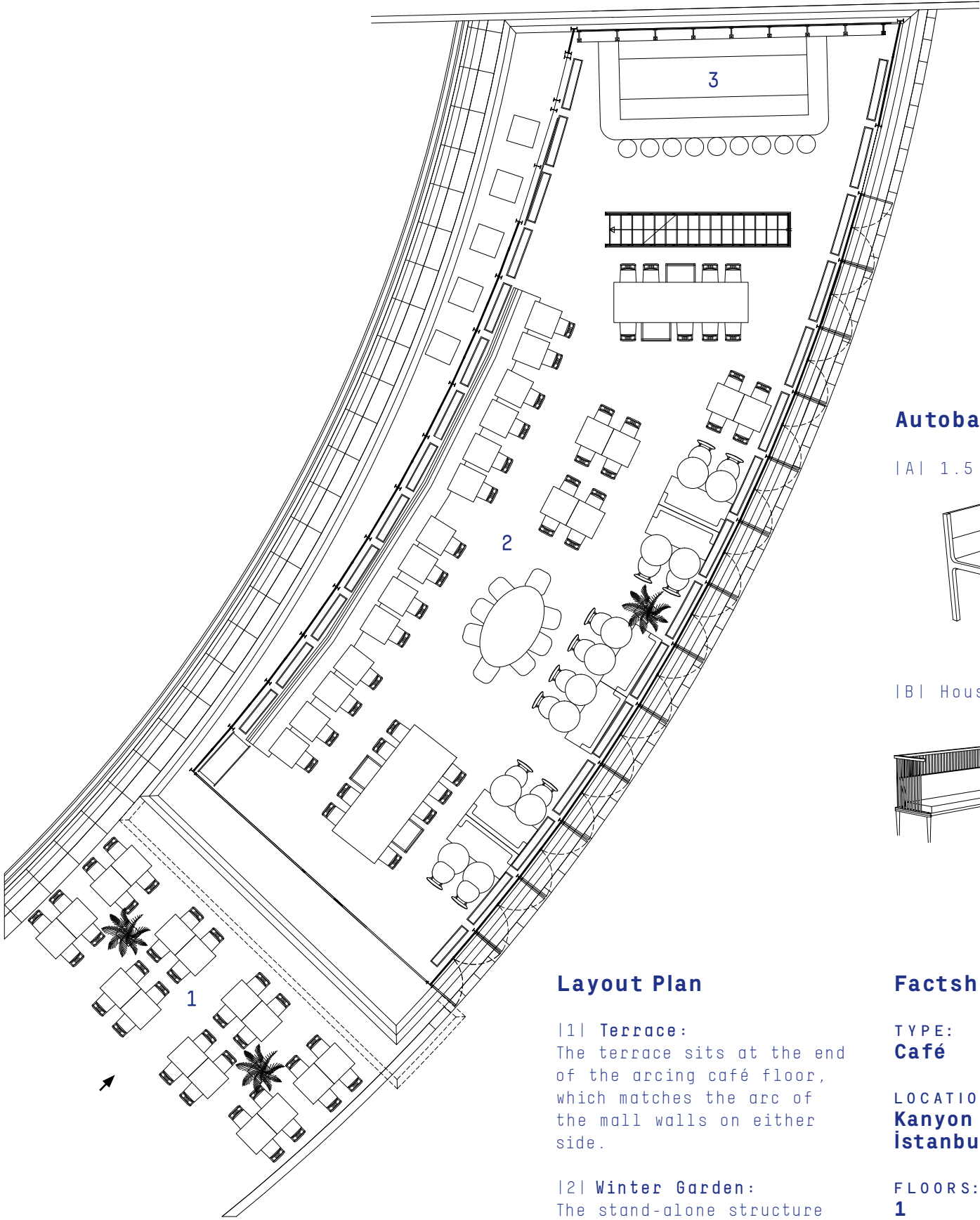
The House Café Canyon

In 2009, Autoban designed the 260 sq m House Café in the curvaceous, open-air and sustainably designed shopping center Kanyon. Located in one of İstanbul's upscale business districts, Levent, the design scheme represents a synthesis of the mall's original architecture, the House Café brand identity and Autoban's own sensibility. Although the interior largely follows the scheme of the other seven İstanbul House Café locations, it is interesting that this site-built structure, made of steel and glass, functions as a transparent box to house the café, which nestles into the canyon-like architecture of the mall.

Although, in a sense, it is an extension of the existing architecture, the structure articulates its own strong visual identity while blending in with its surroundings. The structure appears truncated, sliced diagonally across its roof and clearly resembles half of an A-frame roofline. It is fitted with a glass top and sides—and perches atop a shallow walnut plinth, forming a hard, asymmetrical angle that contrasts actively with the sinuous walls of the mall's first floor, beside and above it. Because the location proscribed

building solid walls in the wide open walkway, this construction turns the entire space into a greenhouse bright with light pouring in on every side. The glass framed with slender steel I-beams forms a shell that supports a stand-alone “winter garden” within the mall's larger structure. The designers make allusion to the iron-framed, predominantly glass-paned winter garden in İstanbul's Dolmabahçe Palace, which Özdemir has described as “handmade, high-ceilinged, and very transparent—a space but not a space.”

To balance the grandeur of this scale and maintain the domestic ambiance at the human scale, Autoban softened the I-beams by painting them white and draping them with long white curtains. The overall effect is to place the restaurant at a distance from the commercial activities around it, and to give visitors the distinct impression that they are tucked snugly away with a view of the romantic terrace seating out the windows and protected, at least momentarily, from the “elements”—in this case, crowds, consumption, and poor purchasing decisions—outside.

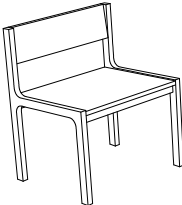


Layout Plan

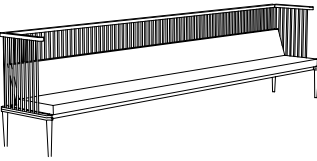
- |1| Terrace:
The terrace sits at the end of the arcing café floor, which matches the arc of the mall walls on either side.
- |2| Winter Garden:
The stand-alone structure resembles a traditional Turkish winter garden. It also forms half of an abstracted house, contrasting with the curvy walls of the canyon-like mall into which it has been inserted.
- |3| Bar

Autoban Furniture

|A| 1.5 Chair



|B| House Sedir



Factsheet

TYPE:
Café

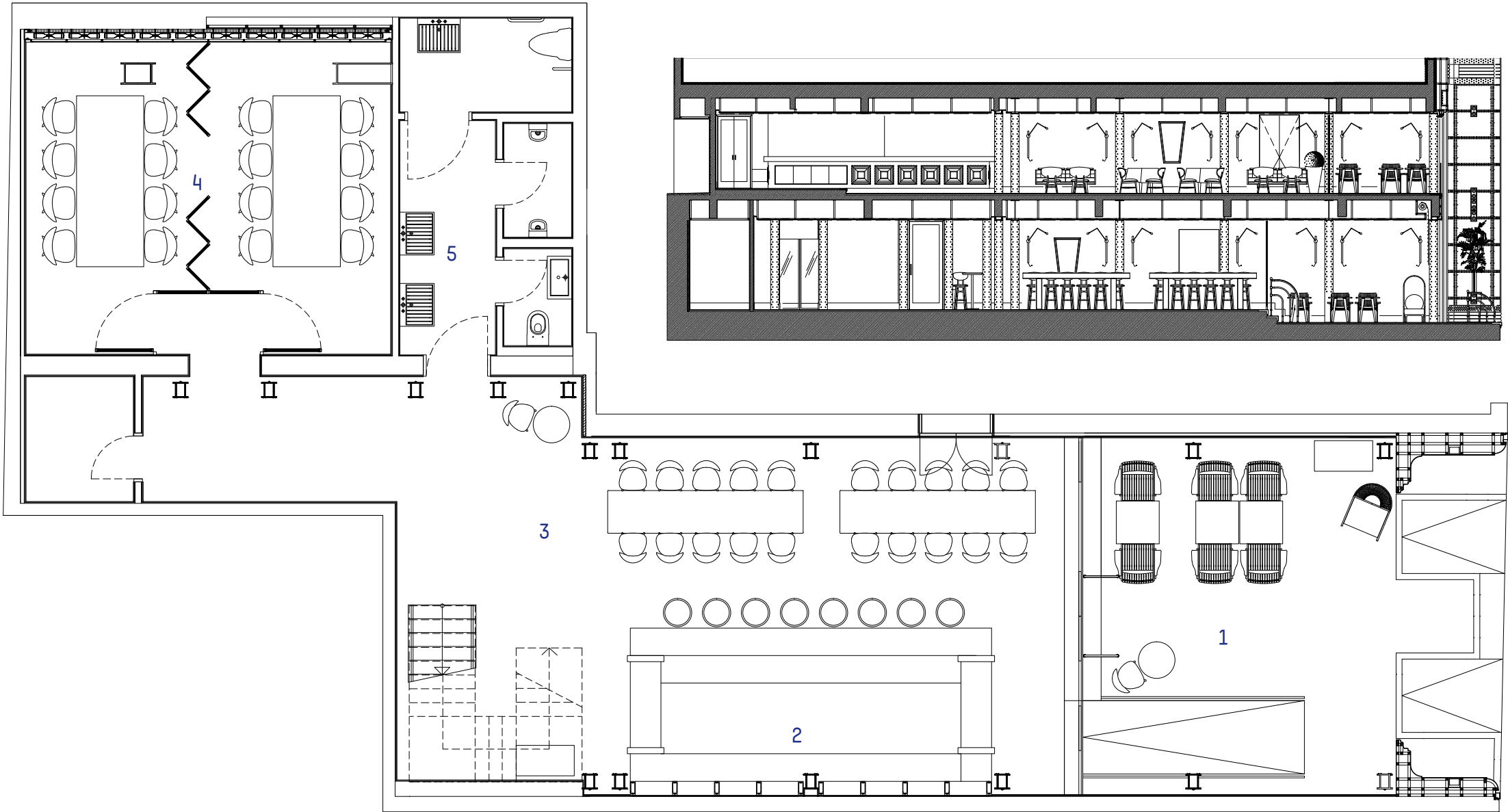
LOCATION:
Kanyon shopping mall, İstanbul

FLOORS:
1

AREA:
260 m² (indoor)
160 m² (outdoor)

YEAR:
2009

CLIENT:
The House Café Group

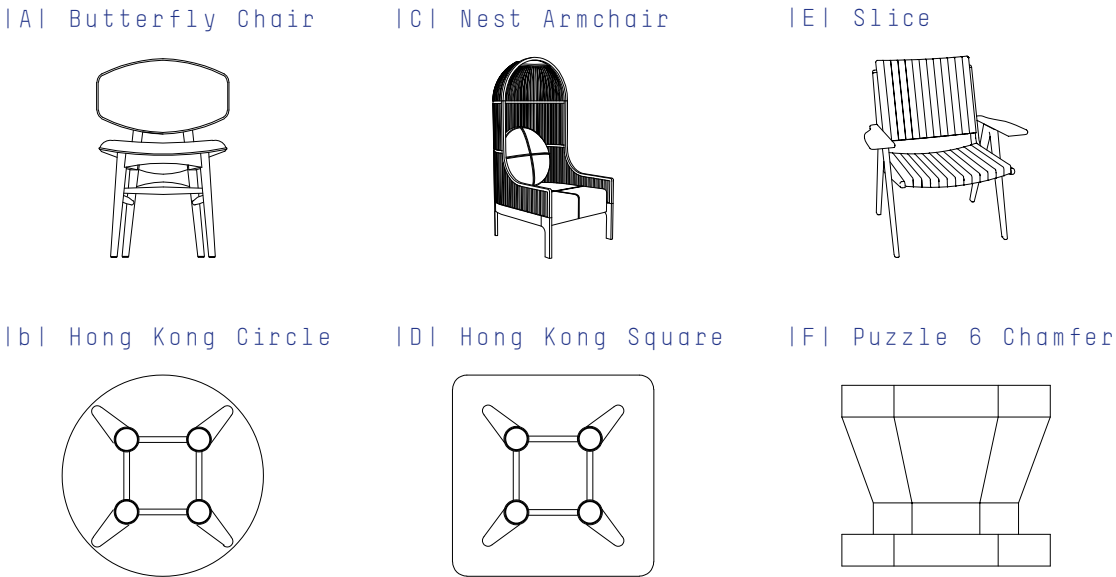


208 Duecento Otto

In 2010, the 208 Duecento Otto restaurant in Sheung Wan, Hong Kong became Autoban's first overseas commission. Named for its location at number 208 Hollywood Road, the building once served as a meat-storage warehouse and is surrounded by all species of trinket and antique shops, offering everything from Ming-dynasty ceramic horsemen to Maoist memorabilia. In a neighborhood where art and design and their quirky offspring are the strongest protagonists, the mash-up of 208's urban Chinese-British context and the eatery's New York-style Italian menu with its emphasis on authenticity served as the designers' inspiration. It is an unlikely fusion of culinary and geographical influences that was a perfect exercise of Autoban's unerring instinct for synthesis and layering. Indeed, the 208 interior features a deep layering of patterns that generates engaging textures throughout. It includes a downstairs bar, two areas for al-fresco dining, one overlooking Hollywood Road, a private dining room walled with wines, and additional seating on the upper floor. A metal staircase connects both floors, which seat 90 guests in total, and

the space is furnished with a number of Autoban stalwarts, including the Nest armchair, the Box sofa and Holy table, the Butterfly chair, the Hong Kong Circle and Hong Kong Square tables, the Slice seat and the Puzzle 6 Chamfer side table. Raw, natural materials, common to Autoban projects, abound: steel pillars, marble tabletops, and solid walnut floors and ceiling. But the most special element is the tiling. Özdemir has long been obsessed with the narrative quality of Chinese tea services, which often tell their tales in blue-and-white porcelain. The studio tiled the walls of 208 with a Chinoiserie-like illustration, but not in Chinese porcelain; instead they designed custom blue-and-white çini porcelain, handcrafted in the Turkish city of Iznik and depicting a story they found in an old Chinese book. Nearby leather-upholstered bar stools provide some New York City counterpoint, only one of the multiple juxtapositions that celebrates combinations that add up to a whole that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Autoban Furniture



Ground Floor

- 11 Entrance: Guests enter the eclectic space through a two-floor rusted metal façade that exposes the front edge of the second floor and the riot of patterns within.
- 12 Bar: Visible from the wood-and-marble bar a few steps up from one of the dining rooms is an exuberant layering of patterns and textures.
- 13 Restaurant: The studio clad the walls with İznik tiles, then paneled the ceiling and floors in wood featuring contrasting square patterns.

- 14 Private Dining Room: This more intimate space is walled with wine bottles and Chinoiserie-like illustrations on blue-and-white çini porcelain, handcrafted in the Turkish city of İznik. The tiles cover the huge brick pizza oven as well.

- 15 WC

Factsheet

TYPE:
Restaurant

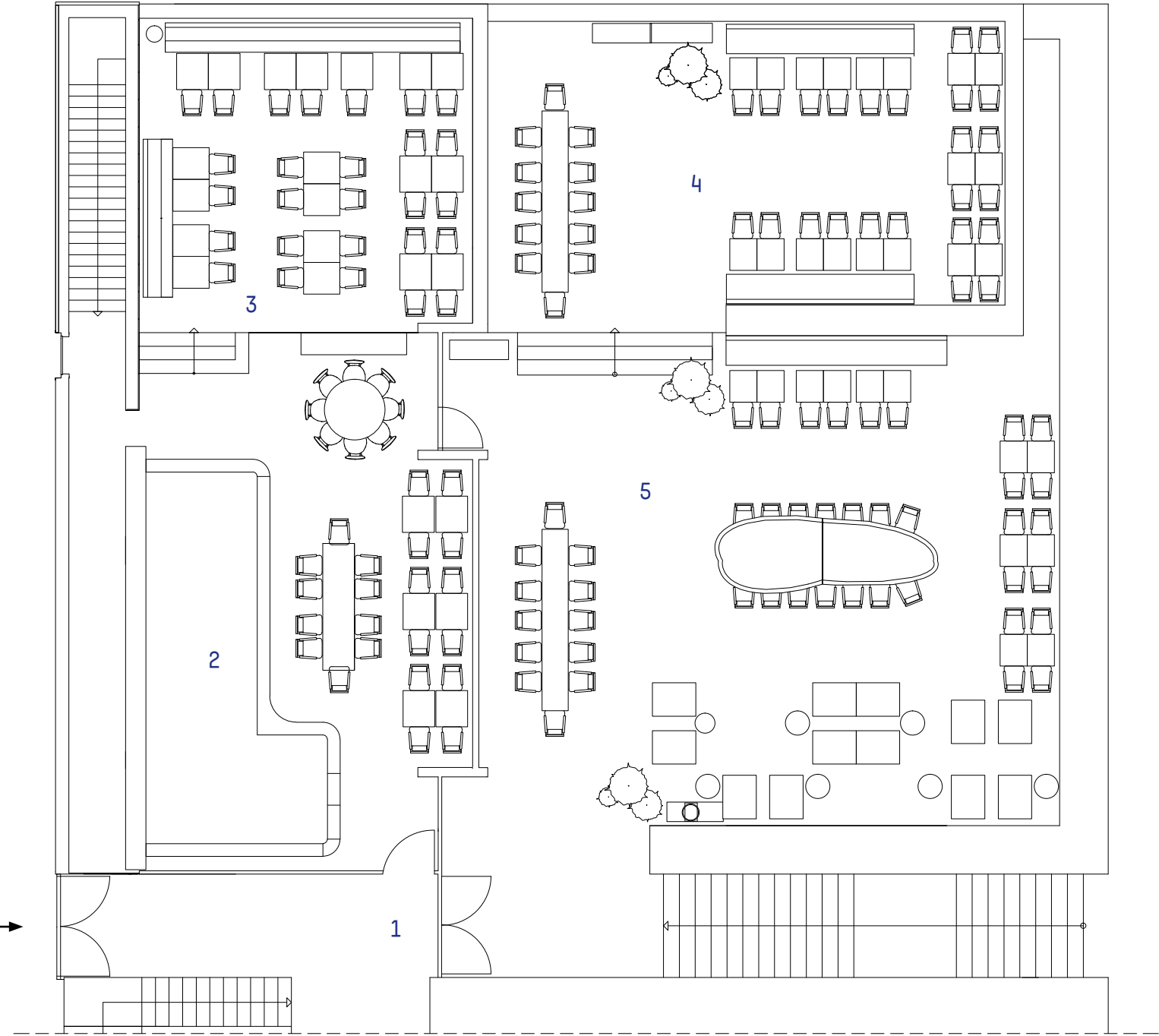
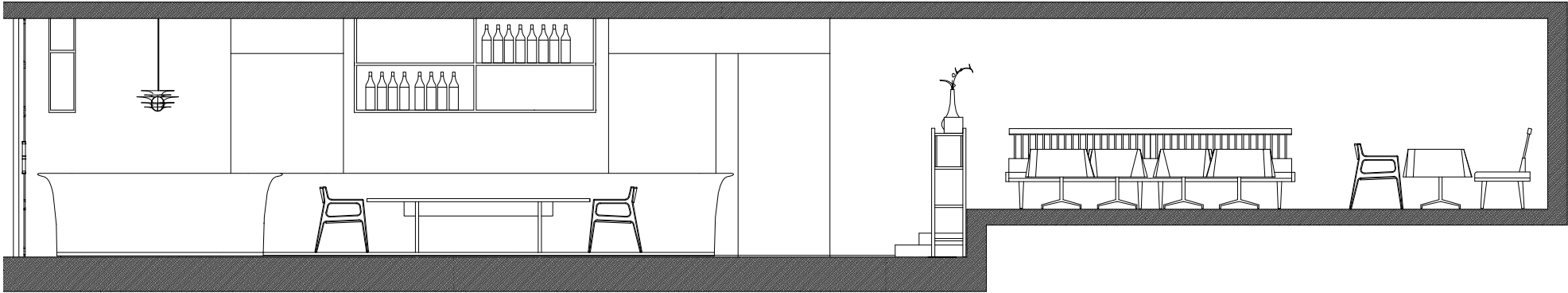
LOCATION:
Hollywood Road, Hong Kong

FLOORS:
2

AREA:
350 m²

YEAR:
2010

CLIENT:
Yenn Wong



Müzedechanga

Müzedechanga may be a gem of a restaurant, but it is made mostly of wood. Lots of it. In 2005, Müzedechanga opened on the grounds of the Sakıp Sabancı Museum in Emirgan. It is a family estate, one of the oldest along the Bosphorus, and a summer house commissioned by an Egyptian prince and built by an Italian architect that once served a short stint as the Montenegrin Embassy. In 1966, the son of wealthy industrialist Hacı Ömer Sabancı made it the repository for his collection of Ottoman calligraphy and paintings until, at last, in 2002, it welcomed its first visitors as a museum. Above the estate's lush 18-hectare gardens, which boast more than 115 botanical species and stress-evaporating views of the city and the strait, the space had been slated to become a standard-issue café. Restaurateurs Savaş Ertunç and Tarık Beyazıt, however, who had owned the much-loved Changa fusion restaurant since 1999, wanted more than a light-fare, business-hours-only café. They asked Autoban to create a space that could accommodate fine dining even after the museum was shuttered for the day. At the same time, Ertunç and Beyazıt wanted the space to evoke their childhood homes in 1960s and 70s Ankara by featuring wood as the protagonist of the punch list. Autoban's extensive use of hardwood in Müzedechanga would be its first and would mark the beginning of the studio's frequent use of the material (most notably for the Portuguese label De La Espada). In fact, the space features so

much solid blond oak that its bilevel interior—with a bar at the entrance, an elevated platform for fine dining, and additional seating on the terrace—exudes a strong Scandinavian spirit. With a diminutive 140 sq m indoors and 270 sq m on the terrace during spring and summer, the greatest challenge the designers faced was also one of its virtues: a lack of walls. The designers resolved this by turning the one wall that was not made of glass into a mirror, visually deepening the space while creating a canvas of its reflected surroundings. The restaurant is furnished with midcentury classics like the Snowball Lamp, by Poul Henningsen, and black lacquered and leather-upholstered furniture by Autoban. Their own bespoke brass and wooden pieces include early versions of the Wing and Deer chairs and the Pebble table. The voluptuous, ship-shaped, solid-oak bar—which was, indeed, modeled after a ship—and an eight-meter marble table with a laser-cut iron base became the focal points of the interior and terrace. Their cool curves and the softened edges of all the furniture offer a counterpoint to the space's massive warm solidity. Another counterpoint comes in the form of a partition separating the entrance from the museum, its radiating forms derived from a traditional Turkish pattern that Autoban further abstracted. The screen provides a veil that is simultaneously soft and angular, permeable and strong—which makes it a perfect synopsis of what lies beyond.

Layout Plan

- 1| Entrance: Visitors enter past a wooden screen filigreed with abstracted traditional patterns.
- 2| Bar: The huge solid oak bar was inspired by shipwrights.
- 3| Restaurant: The dining "room" is raised several steps above the bar area.
- 4| Upper Terrace: A small section of seating extends outdoors from the restaurant level.
- 5| Lower Terrace: In good weather, the bar level terrace combined with the upper terrace, nearly doubles the cafe's square footage.

Autoban Furniture

- A| Deer Chair
- B| Custom Pebble Table

Factsheet

TYPE:
Restaurant

LOCATION:
Sakıp Sabancı Museum, Emirgan, İstanbul

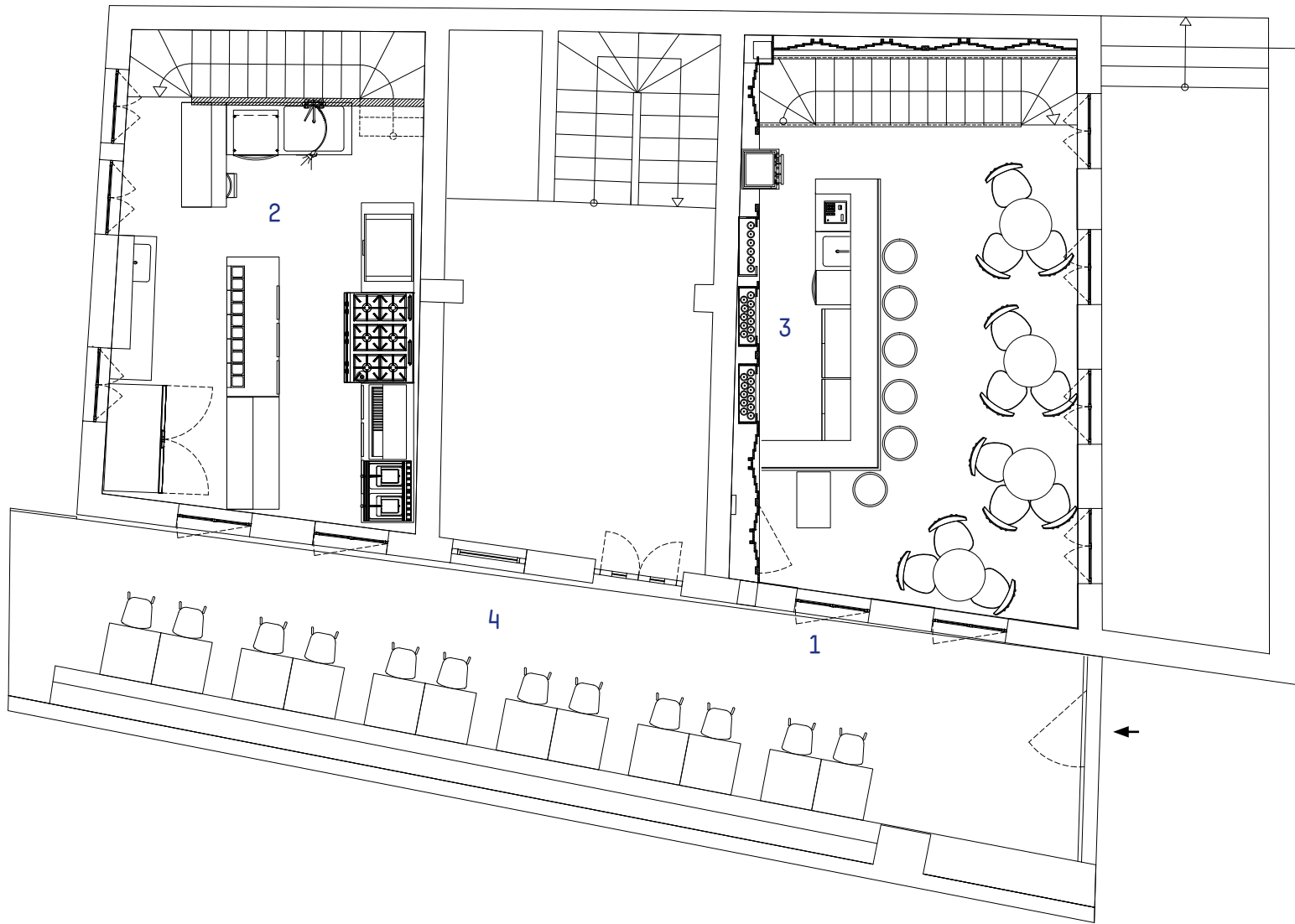
FLOORS:
1

AREA:
140 m² (indoor)
270 m² (outdoor)

YEAR:
2006

CLIENT:
Savaş Ertunç & Tarık Beyazıt

Ground Floor



Münferit

Located in a new building not far from the ebb and flow of the pedestrian shopping boulevard İstiklal, Münferit is a high-end traditional fish restaurant with a modern persona. Regular Münferit patrons appreciate Turkish classics as well as international culinary fashions, and return in part for the owner's Beylerbeyi rakı, which is made at the family distillery in western Turkey from grapes and anise that are triple distilled. But they also return for a cool atmosphere made palpably graphic thanks to an Autoban interior scheme. Autoban's 2010 design translates the story of a time-honored culinary culture into an architecture of muscular lines. Indeed, with its mosaic floors, tabletops made from lush slabs of marble, and a determined riff on Art Deco paneling, starting with bold fins that extend off the gray façade, Münferit stands out amongst the city's fish and meze restaurants. It also exemplifies the graphical, layered, textural qualities of the studio's work—as well as its westward-looking cosmopolitanism. Both floors of the restaurant sit at street level due to the steep incline of the hill on which it perches. Even sidewalk seating climbs multiple steps to absorb the slope. Inside, on

the upper ground floor there is a bar and lounge area and a mews-like terrace, with the main dining room situated on the bottom floor, along with patio seating. During the day it is easiest to appreciate the richness of the materials and the repetitive wall pattern featured in Münferit, but evening light renders these elements wonderfully sculptural. Autoban used dark-chocolate-glazed ceramic tiles on perimeter walls, rosewood to panel the high walls, and mirrors placed between the wooden panels and the ceiling to visually expand the space. Most of the wood-paneled walls (accompanied by custom furnishings) feature square or rectangular reliefs, which are mainstays of European décor. Here, however, they are repeated by being nested in groups of five per panel over interior walls and the bar, as well as across the ceiling, where they adorn pressed metal panels that echo their exaggerated Deco pattern. Also graphical, but softer, is the bespoke shelving behind metal "cage" doors that are embedded flush in the interior walls downstairs. They showcase row upon glowing row of the rakı bottles that are a vital part of the traditional Turkish fish meal, while making them a diffuse light source in their own right.

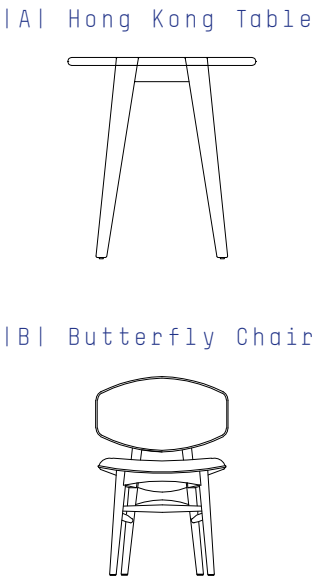
Basement Floor



Ground Floor

- |1| **Bar Entrance:**
On a steep slope, the restaurant's two floors are each at "ground" level. The top entrance leads to the bar.
- |2| **Kitchen**
- |3| **Bar:**
At the far end of the bar, a staircase leads down to the main dining room.
- |4| **Terrace:**
A small patio downstairs and a larger, mews-like corridor upstairs offer space for plein-air dining.

Autoban Furniture



Factsheet

TYPE:
Restaurant

LOCATION:
Beyoğlu, İstanbul

FLOORS:
2

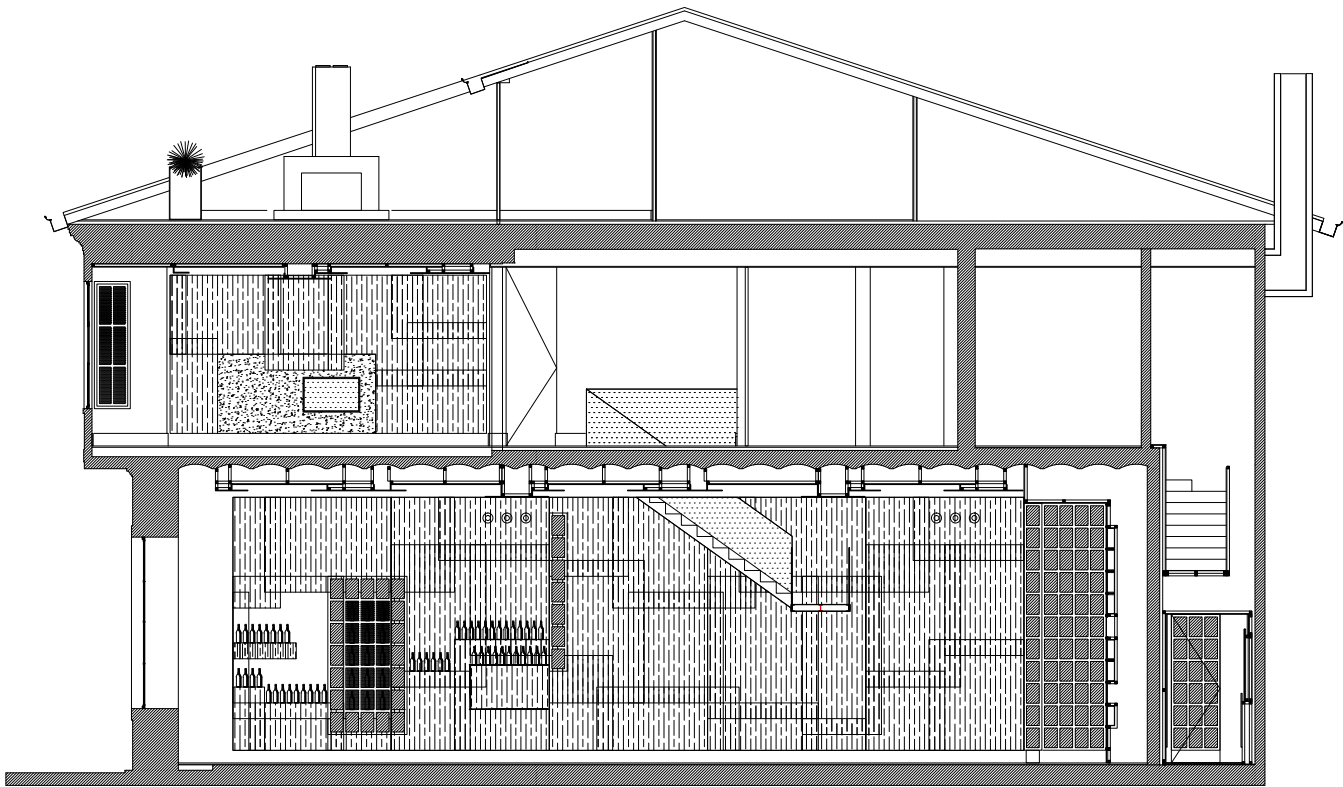
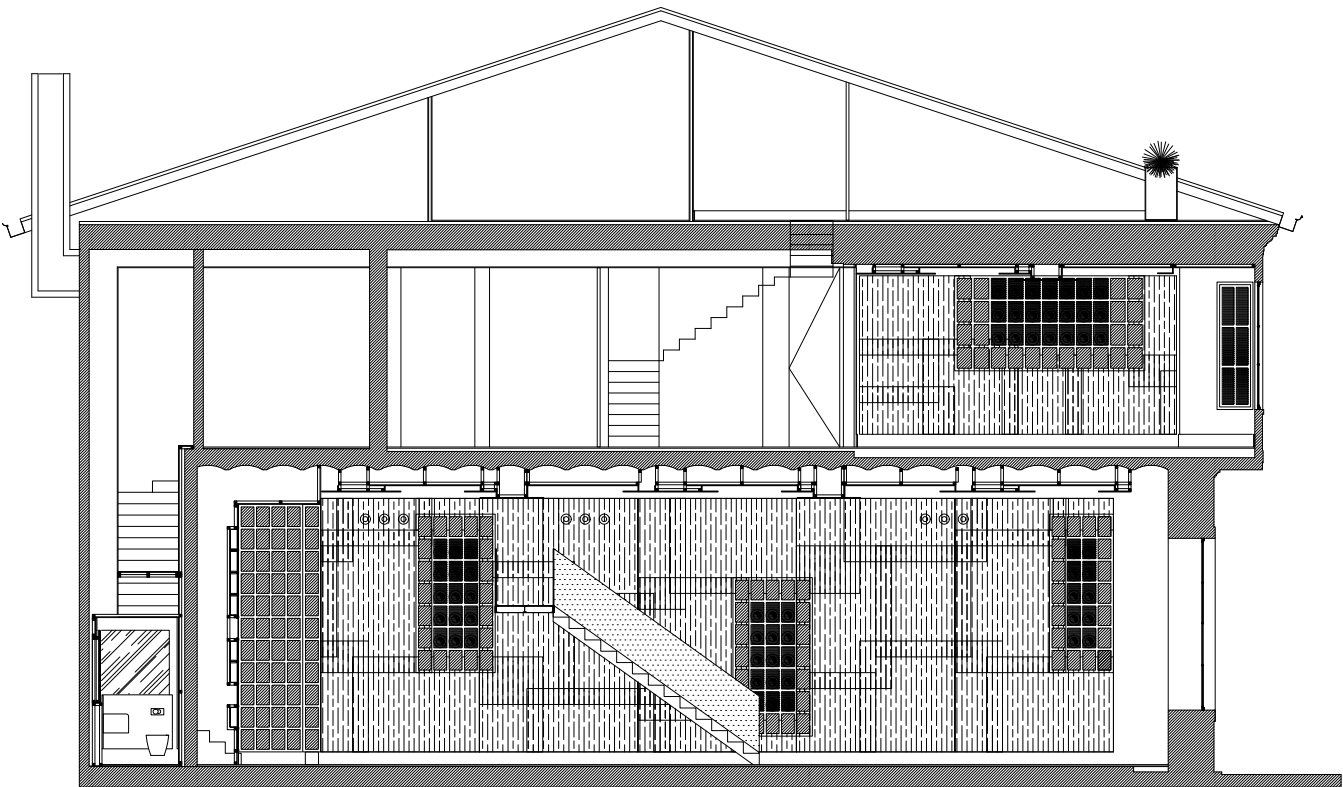
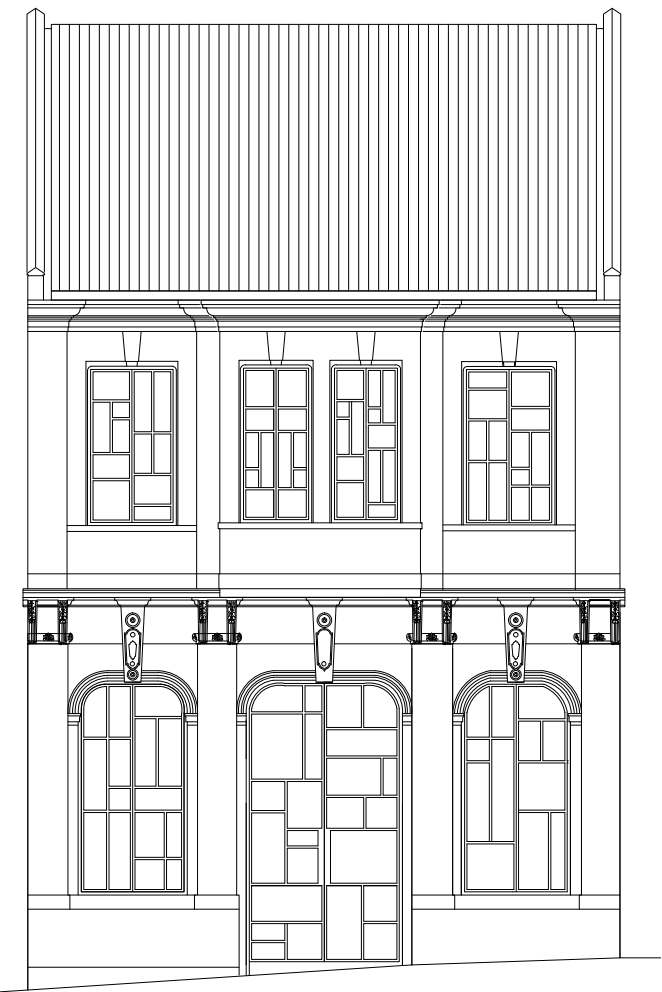
AREA:
160 m² (indoor)
60 m² (outdoor)

YEAR:
2010

CLIENT:
Ferit Sarper

Basement Floor

- |1| **Restaurant**
- |2| **Terrace**
- |3| **WC**



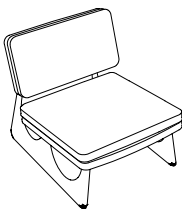
Gaspar

In 2013, in Karaköy, one of İstanbul’s oldest commercial centers once dubbed “ancient Galata,” Autoban designed the 280 sq m, three-floor restaurant Gaspar. Like the city itself, the waterfront neighborhood represents a synthesis—of Eastern Rome, Byzantium, the Ottoman Empire, and Atatürk’s republic; of monumental office buildings and banks beside warehouses, electrical and auto-part shops, and repair garages—and forms a unique historical texture that has been the object of extreme gentrification in recent years. Offering renovated architecture and avant-garde venues beside gritty historicity and faded grandeur, the district is one of the burgeoning epicenters of the city’s creative class and contemporary social scene. Autoban first studied the neighborhood context, then the building, which had been a printing house for over a century, and then the existing interior. The materials selection and detailing refer to actual qualities and objects found on Karaköy’s streets that are authentic and, as the designers say, “anti-sophisticated.” Autoban then made metaphorical layers from the area, architecture, and eras, and recreated them as a piece of micro-architecture. In most projects, the studio’s layers are easily readable because a gap is maintained between them. Sometimes this is a literal gap, sometimes it is notional; but they don’t usually touch each other (physically or sensibly) and, if they must, a distinction between them is clearly established.

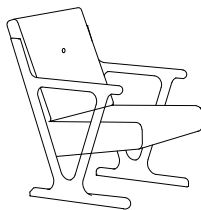
In Gaspar, these layers were folded into the concept of the 16th-century European cabinet of curiosities, an encyclopedic collection of objects whose categories were ill-defined. (The partners are constant collectors themselves: Özdemir has collected old watches, books, sunglasses, even old jackknives.) To create this cabinet, Autoban arranged design elements by knolling, displaying like items parallel or at right angles to each other. Overlapping plywood panels were finished in various stains and sizes, and positioned at various heights and distances from the walls (ranging from 20 cm to one meter), creating a studied arrangement that appears random, a perception amplified by the high ceilings. Together the layers form a single architectural shell, a cube inside the building, but because the original architecture was not a perfect box, pockets formed behind the cube’s walls could be used for various purposes, such as a cloakroom. The central staircase and illuminated glass surfaces behind the plywood panels are the two elements that reinforce the restaurant’s sense of volume and depth. The lighting highlights the idea of diversity within a system while illuminating particular surfaces and objects: arranged according to a minimalist principle—dim and dotted with spotlights and delimited by brightly lit wall niches that display liquor bottles—Autoban presents the interior as a cabinet of curiosities for human nature.

Autoban Furniture

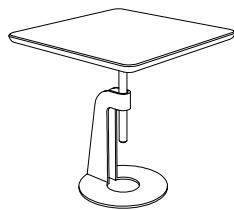
|A| Sledge



|C| Woody



|E| Tool Table



|B| Ladyfinger



|D| Bob Barstool



Factsheet

TYPE:
Restaurant

LOCATION:
Karaköy, İstanbul

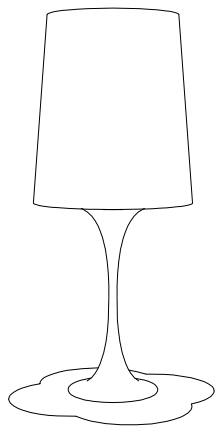
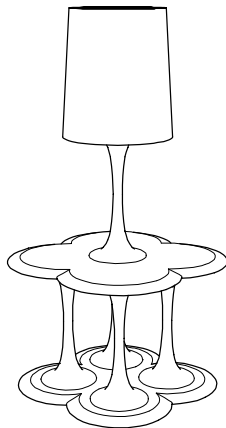
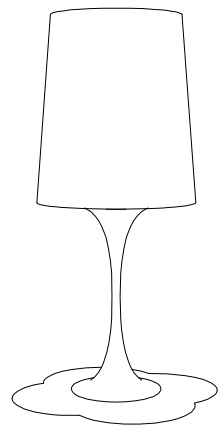
FLOORS:
3

AREA:
280 m²

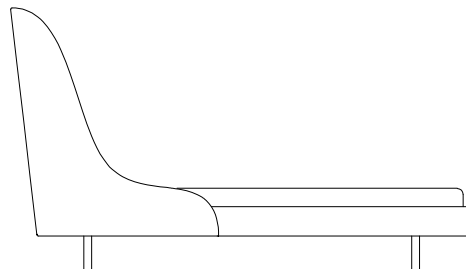
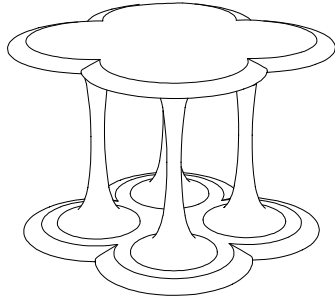
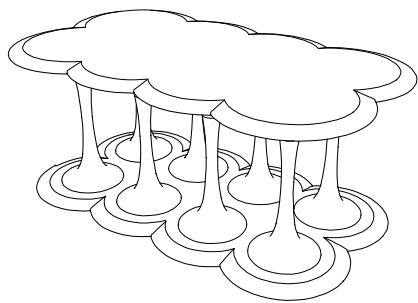
YEAR:
2013

CLIENT:
Ferit Sarper

DAISY SERIES



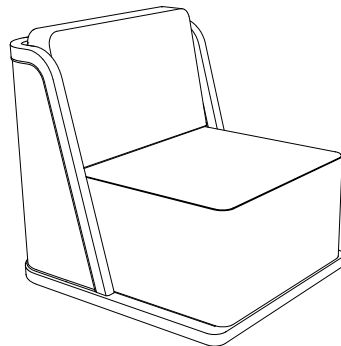
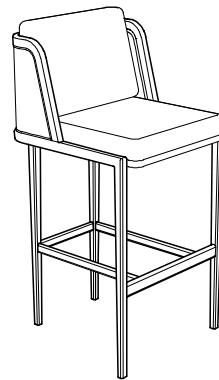
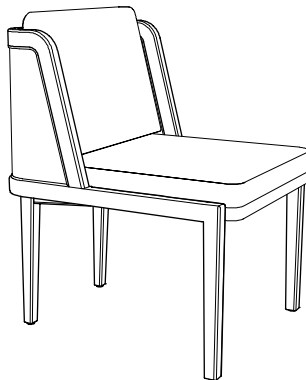
DAISY LAMP	DAISY LAMP TABLE	DAISY LAMP MARBLE
YEAR OF CREATION: 2010	2010	2010
DIMENSIONS: D.46 cm H.83 cm	D.41 cm H.85 cm	D.46 cm H.83 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut	Oak or walnut	Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with marble base
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	Autoban	De La Espada



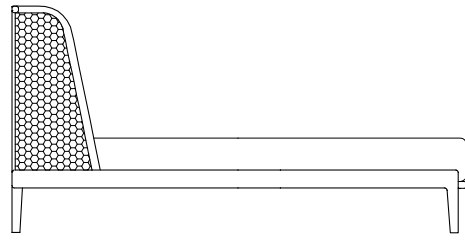
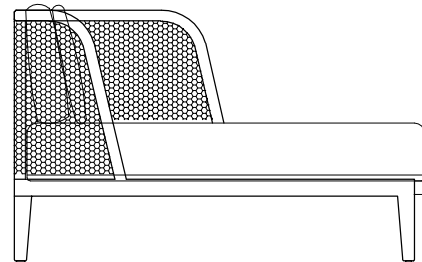
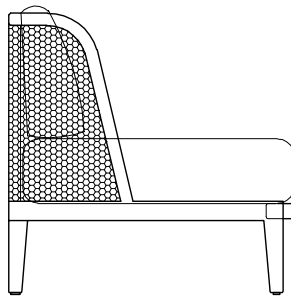
DAISY COFFEE TABLE	DAISY SIDE TABLE	DAISY BED
YEAR OF CREATION: 2010	2009	2010
DIMENSIONS: W.109 cm D.64 cm H.45 cm	W.62 cm D.62 cm H.45 cm	W.160 cm L.220 cm H.134 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut	Oak or walnut—also available with marble top	Oak or walnut with leather or fabric upholstery
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	De La Espada	Autoban

The Daisy Family includes light, side, and coffee tables, a lamp and a bed that riff on the sculptural possibilities of solid wood. Developed for the House Hotel Nişantaşı, an interior dominated conspicuously by vertical and horizontal lines and rectangular wall paneling, Daisy pieces provided counterpoint, evoking the extraordinary liquid replication of a living cell.

THRONE SERIES



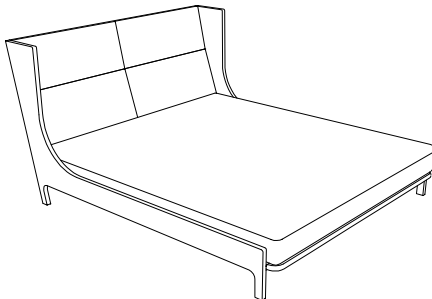
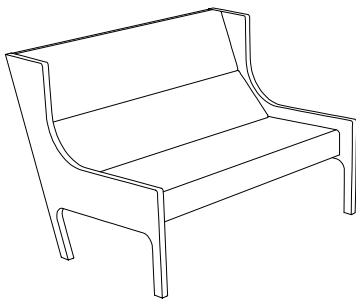
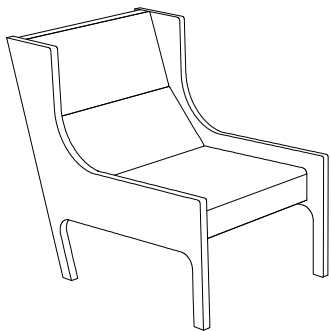
THRONE CHAIR	THRONE BAR STOOL	THRONE ARMCHAIR
YEAR OF CREATION: 2010	2010	2011
DIMENSIONS: W.51 cm D.53 cm H.78 cm	W.50.5 cm D.51 cm H.103 cm seat height: 73 cm, seat depth: 37.5 cm	W.67 cm L.77 cm H.77 cm
MATERIAL: Oak or walnut with rattan back rest, fabric or leather upholstery	Oak or walnut with rattan back rest, fabric or leather upholstery	Oak or walnut with leather or fabric upholstery
MANUFACTURER: Autoban	De La Espada	Autoban



THRONE SOFA	THRONE DAYBED	THRONE BED
YEAR OF CREATION: 2010	2010	2010
DIMENSIONS: W.200 cm D.79 cm H.81.5 cm	W.120 cm D.65 cm H.74 cm	W.160 cm L.200 cm H.100 cm
MATERIAL: Oak or walnut with leather / fabric / rattan	Oak or walnut with leather / fabric / rattan	Oak or walnut with rattan headboard
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	Autoban	Autoban

Throne consists of a dining chair, bar stool, lounge chair, sofa, and bed, even an outdoor collection. Created for the House Hotels Nişantaşı and Bosphorus and used in the Turkish Airlines CIP Lounge, the concept, based on forms reminiscent of petite salon furnishings of the 1970s, juxtaposes nostalgia and contemporaneity by pairing rattan and leather. Autoban constructed the outdoor pieces from steel tube profiles and expanded metal sheets, a meshy industrial interpretation of the porous rattan used indoors. Trading the warm materials out for metal, they create strong but lace-like surfaces.

BERGÈRE SERIES



BERGÈRE ARMCHAIR

YEAR OF CREATION: 2005

DIMENSIONS: W.65 cm D. 92 cm H.86 cm, seat height 42 cm

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

BERGÈRE SOFA

2005

W.125 cm D.92 cm H.86 cm, seat height 42 cm

BERGÈRE BED

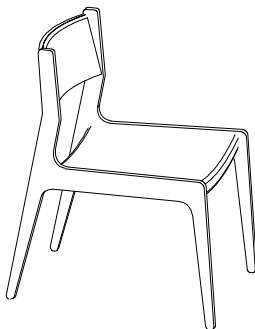
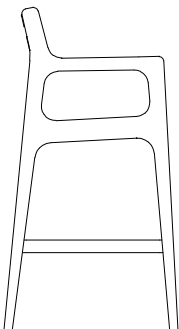
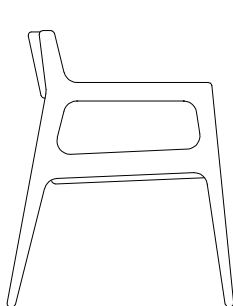
2007

Available in Queen and King in EU, UK, and USA sizes. Headboard height 110 cm, platform height 20 cm

De La Espada

Inspired by the classical French armchair, the Bergère has an italicized profile combined with a rigid, boxy outer shell. Another of the studio's furniture "archetypes," the designers came at its design from a purist's point of view (and with a nod to naval engineering) to create a naïve but cleanly modern form using plywood.They eliminated frivolous details to arrive at an object of great precision. The Bergère sofa and bed both share the chair's laid-back profile combined with a rigid shell.

DEER SERIES



DEER CHAIR

YEAR OF CREATION: 2003

DIMENSIONS: W.52 cm D.65 cm H.83 cm

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

DEER BAR STOOL

2006

W.49 cm D.55.5 cm H.104 cm seat height 64 cm, arm height 88 cm

ARMLESS DEER CHAIR

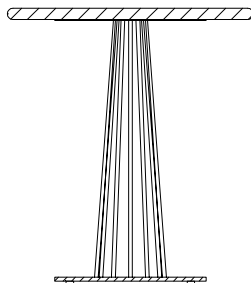
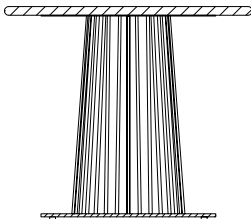
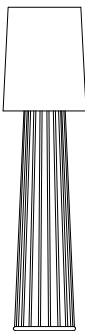
2006

W.52 cm D.65 cm H.83 cm

De La Espada

Inspired by the delicate legs of a deer, the Deer series consists of a dining chair, an armless chair, and a bar stool. These pieces are one of the studio's early "archetype" explorations, deeper dives into particular product typologies, one by one, and a paring away of everything superfluous through an Autoban lens. Deer was developed at a time when the studio was working with plywood, partly for its high strength-and stiffness-to-weight ratios. At that point, CNC milling technology was new to Turkey; Deer's two side frames (its legs and arms) were milled from sheets of plywood to form the structure of the piece as a whole.

TULIP SERIES



TULIP LAMP

YEAR OF CREATION: 2007

DIMENSIONS: D.40 cm H.88 / 145 / 164 cm

MATERIAL: Gold-plated steel with fabric shade

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

TULIP TABLE

2007

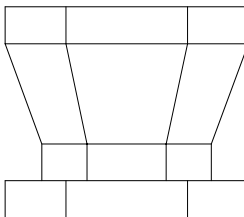
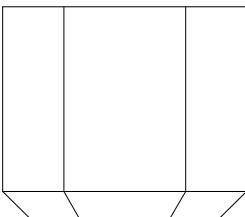
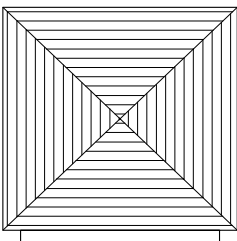
H.73 cm, R.32.5 / 42.5 / 52.5 cm

Painted steel and marble

Autoban

The Tulip Family was born in male, female, and child-size lamps made of brass, and grew into café and bar tables. During Autoban's work on Vakko retail spaces, they translated their penchant for a cage-like repetition of metal rods—e.g. their Pumpkin stool and Spider lights—into brass lighting. Brass had found its way into the studio's material library via previous Vakko projects for its glamour and associations with historic Turkish residential space. Considered an old-fashioned material at the time, they gave it a modern form: a wasp-waisted cylinder crowned with a simple modern lampshade.

PUZZLE SERIES



PUZZLE 4

YEAR OF CREATION: 2010

DIMENSIONS: W.40 cm L.40 cm H.40 cm

MATERIAL: Oak or walnut

MANUFACTURER: Autoban

PUZZLE 6

2010

W.46 cm L.40 cm H.40 cm

Oak or walnut with leather upholstery

Autoban

PUZZLE 6 CHAMFER

2010

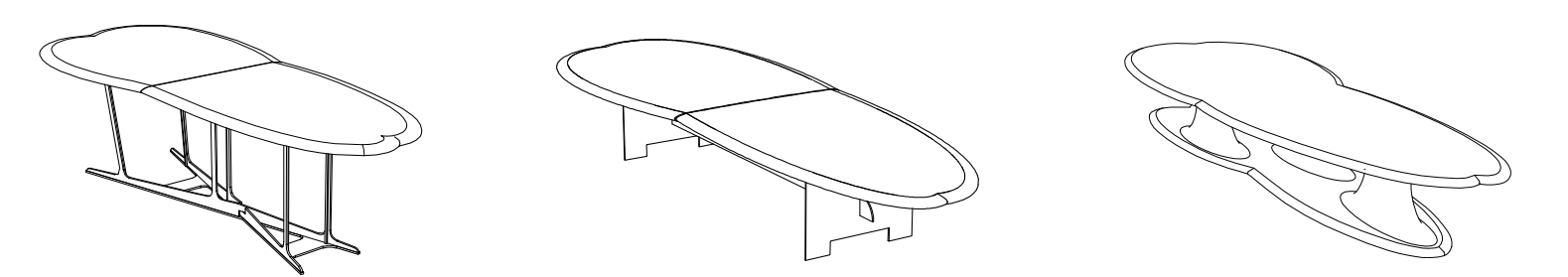
W.46 cm L.40 cm H.40 cm

Oak or walnut

Autoban

Puzzle is a series composed of the Puzzle stool and three coffee tables numbered 4, 6, and the 6 Chamfer. These pieces are multitasking units that do not lock together (like jigsaw pieces) but can be placed together to create an interesting micro-terrain, especially since each may be used as either table or stool, depending on the environment or the need of the moment. The series is a product of the studio's formal studies of the hexagon and cube, an ongoing experiment that also resulted in the Cube and Pill lamps, the Daisy series, and the Cloud table.

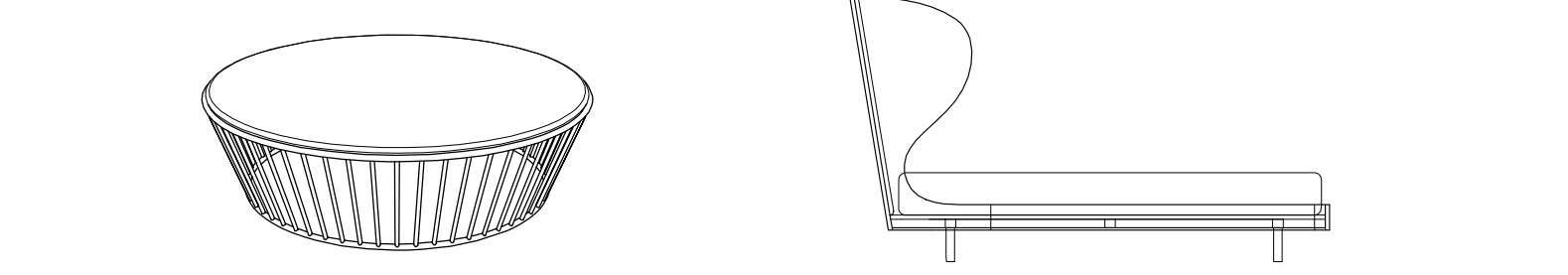
PEBBLE SERIES



PEBBLE	CUSTOM PEBBLE TABLE	PEBBLE MARBLE
YEAR OF CREATION: 2007	2005	2007/2011
DIMENSIONS: W. 284 cm D.117 cm H.79 cm	W.490 cm D.170cm H.75 cm	W.440 cm D.155 cm H.71 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with aluminum legs painted red or chrome-plated	marble and sheet metal	Violet Afyon or white Afyon marble (limited edition)
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	Autoban	Autoban

Sculpted from contrasting materials to anchor the terrace of the Muzedechanga restaurant, the first Pebble dining table had a marble top and scissor-shaped iron legs. Later, it was modified to echo the big House Café breadboards-cum-service plates and a limited-edition version was made in marble. Its organic form suggests that relentless waves wore away a block of marble abandoned on the seashore. In Özdemir’s view, however, the table is not about the form of the object we can see but the force—invisible—that formed it: “The shape of the table,” she says, “is all about waves.”

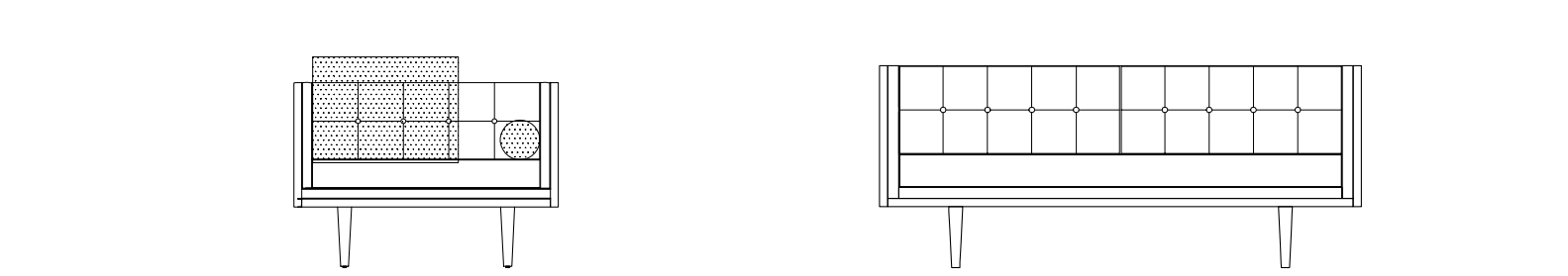
SUITE SERIES



SUITE COFFEE TABLE	SUITE BED
YEAR OF CREATION: 2008	2008
DIMENSIONS: D.113 cm H.30 cm	Available in Queen and King in EU, UK and USA sizes. Headboard height 128 cm, platform height 30 cm
MATERIAL: Gold-plated steel with marble top	Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics and leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	De La Espada

Autoban made the Suite series for their Witt İstanbul hotel project, but they had originally sketched the idea out for their Ayazpaşa apartment. It consists of a bed and a coffee table. Upholstered in a variety of fabrics, the bed’s wooden outer frame, including a high headboard with soft round corners, embraces its user. The resulting shape makes even a strange hotel room feel cozy. The Suite coffee table serves as a living-room centerpiece. In marble, it offers a sense of high luxury.

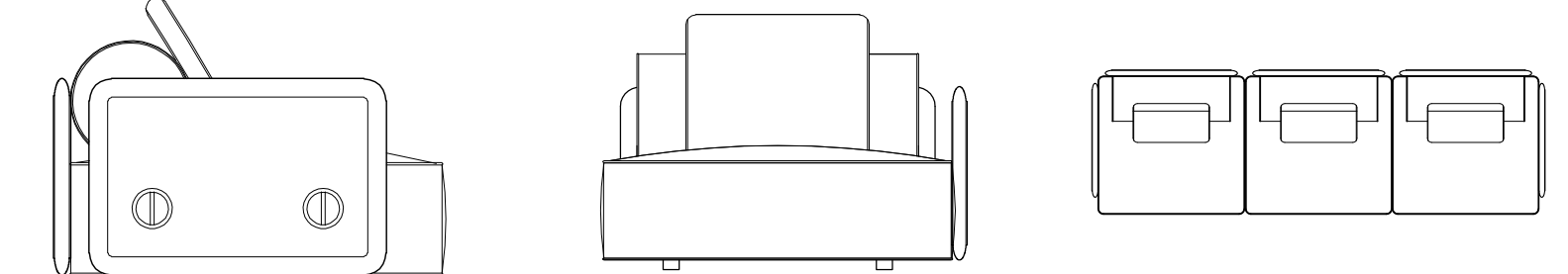
BOX SOFA SERIES



BOX ARMCHAIR	BOX SOFA
YEAR OF CREATION: 2008	2007
DIMENSIONS: W. 100 cm D.80 cm H.70 cm, seat height 45 cm	W. 180 / 220 cm D.80 cm H.70 cm, seat height 45 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics	Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics and leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada	De La Espada

The Box sofa takes its cues from mid-century Modernism and was designed for a specific interior in which all seating would be clustered at the center of the space. To look handsome from every angle, Box, which would also become a compact sofa and armchair, features a deep seat and a short canted back with tapering legs attached deep under its belly to suggest that the heavy seat is somehow floating above the floor. Linked closely to an actual interior in which it would have to stand alone, with a balanced structure and emphatically orthogonal shape, Box strikes a strong architectural chord.

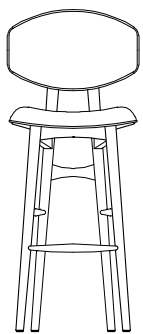
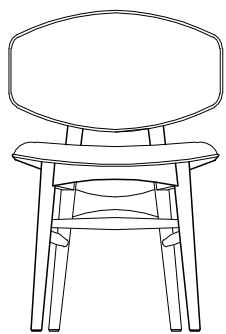
DECO SOFA SERIES



DECO SOFA
YEAR OF CREATION: 2009
DIMENSIONS: M: W.220 cm D.104 cm H.56 cm, seat height 34 cm / L: W.243 cm D.117 cm H.56 cm, seat height 34 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics and leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

A modernist approach to Art Deco, this sofa with ottoman has a deep seat and oversized cylinder cushions. Considering comfort, the designers took cues from the traditional divan, a couch with one end raised, no arms, and a half-height backrest. Then they wrapped it in wooden panels so that it does not need a wall at its back and so that its dimensions may be altered according to the size of the interior.

BUTTERFLY SERIES



BUTTERFLY CHAIR

YEAR OF CREATION: 2010

DIMENSIONS: W.48.4 cm D.53.7 cm H.78.7 cm, seat height 43.8 cm

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

Taking inspiration from the wings of a butterfly, this chair works as a desk or dinner table chair, and has also been translated into a bar stool. Butterfly had its provenance in the studio's design of Hong Kong's Duecento Otto restaurant, for which they needed a bespoke seat with an Asian spirit. They chose a form—slender legs leaning together, staggered bracing dowels and a slightly winged backrest with sloping sides—that traces the outlines of Asian temples and traditional Asian garb while generating maximum comfort.

BUTTERFLY BAR STOOL

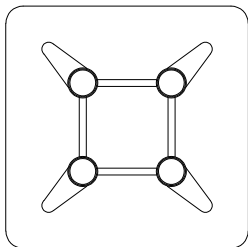
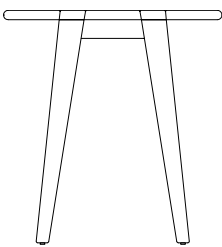
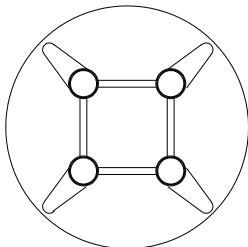
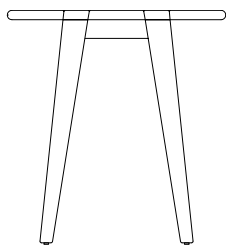
2010

W.55 cm D.47 cm H.109 cm, seat height 71.5 cm

Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics

De La Espada

HONG KONG SERIES



HONG KONG CIRCLE

YEAR OF CREATION: 2010

DIMENSIONS: H.75 cm D.70 cm

MATERIAL: Oak or walnut with marble top

MANUFACTURER: Autoban

The Hong Kong tables were custom-designed for the studio's first overseas project, the Italian restaurant Duecento Otto. Made to provide a sense of intimacy while dining, the tabletop can be made from walnut, oak, or marble and is available in a square or circular shape. Cousin to the Butterfly designs, its tapered and chamfered legs give the table an air of lightness and sophistication.

HONG KONG SQUARE

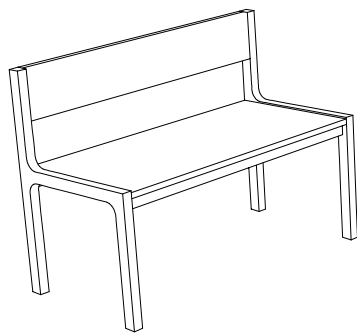
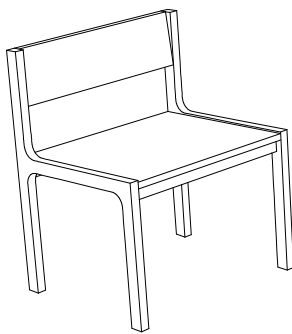
2010

W.80 cm D. 80 cm H.75 cm

Oak or walnut with marble top

Autoban

1.5 & 2.5 SERIES



1.5 CHAIR

YEAR OF CREATION: 2003

DIMENSIONS: W.66 cm D.53 cm H.75 cm, seat height 45 cm

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

The House Café is based on the sharing of a communal table, food, and conversation. The 1.5 chair is about sharing a chair, a response to technology's increasing isolation of the individual. Its oversized seat accommodates people of larger girth, but also two people of slight build, or even just a person who spreads out while seated. Its form, including angled rear legs, comes from the designers' ongoing study of furniture typologies, and is one of their own "archetypes": pure in form, made in humble plywood. Later, by pulling 1.5 apart, the 2.5 bench was born.

2.5 CHAIR

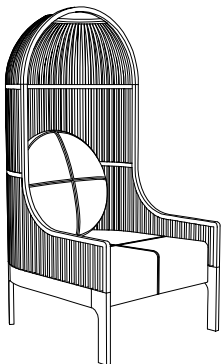
2006

W.106 cm D.53 cm H.75 cm, seat height 45 cm

Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut

De La Espada

NEST SERIES



NEST ARMCHAIR

YEAR OF CREATION: 2009

DIMENSIONS: W.66 cm D.85 cm H.144 cm

MATERIAL: Painted HDF with an eggshell finish in black, white, beige, or brown and a range of fabrics

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

The cage motif recurs in Autoban's work, used in anything from lighting to interiors to the tall wooden slats of the Nest armchair. A cage defines its own architectural space and, embracing the sitter, creates a space of comfort and calm. Nest conveys safety and warmth, and carves out a place apart even in a crowded public space. Designed at a time when the Autoban partners were starting their own families, Baby Nest is a cradle that shelters infants and can be converted into a daybed when baby grows up.

BABY NEST

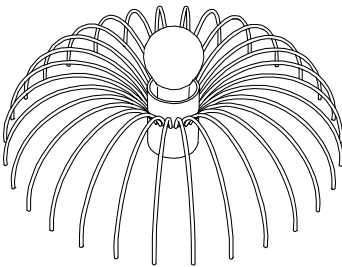
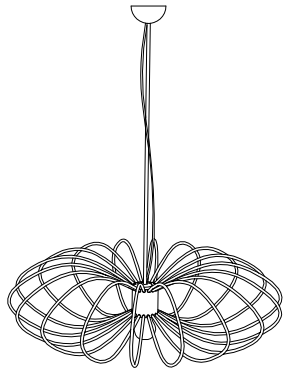
2012

W.74 cm D. 150 cm H.140 cm

Stained wood with fabric or leather upholstery

Autoban

SPIDER LAMP SERIES



FLYING SPIDER

SPIDER

YEAR OF CREATION: 2003

2003

DIMENSIONS: W.89 cm H.20 cm, drop length of complete fitting 141cm

D.40 cm / D.60 cm / D.80 cm

MATERIAL: Stainless steel or gold-plated steel with crown-mirrored bulb

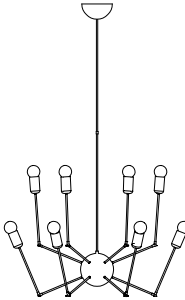
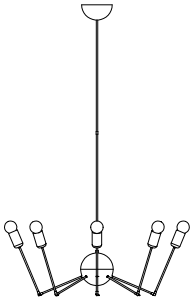
Stainless steel or gold-plated steel with crown-mirrored bulb

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

De La Espada

This arachnid won't give you the creepy-crawlies: with Spider, Autoban made the insect both beautiful and illuminating. The designers played with a bulb and spindly bent metal rods to compose it and to map its edges to the wall strategically, for optimal shadow-casting by its chromed bulb. The result of using natural forms, raw materials, and local production techniques, it comes as a pendant light too: the torus-shaped Flying Spider. The first version was distinctive for its red fabric-sheathed cable.

OCTOPUS LIGHT SERIES



SINGLE OCTOPUS

DOUBLE OCTOPUS

YEAR OF CREATION: 2005

2005

DIMENSIONS: Diameter is extendable from 67 cm to 101 cm, fixed drop length from ceiling to hinge 95 cm or 122.5 cm

Diameter is extendable from 67 cm to 101 cm, fixed drop length from ceiling to hinge 95 cm or 122.5 cm

MATERIAL: steel painted red, black, white, blue, or turquoise

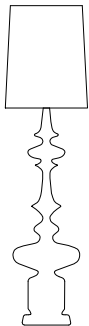
steel painted red, black, white, blue, or turquoise

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

De La Espada

Octopus features a globe at the center of hinged "tentacles" tipped with light bulbs—an evolution of the Lamba lamp and the studio's archetype of the classical chandelier. In it, a cliché object makes a unique statement. Every arm of Octopus is movable, enabling the user to arrange a different profile and light effect. Its two versions differ only in the number of their arms.

KING SERIES



KING

WIRED KING

YEAR OF CREATION: 2006

2009

DIMENSIONS: D.40 cm H.160 cm

D.40 cm H.160 cm

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or painted HDF

Stainless steel, gold-plated steel, or painted steel

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

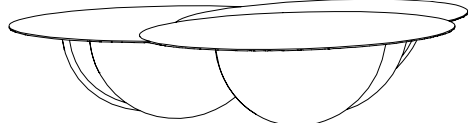
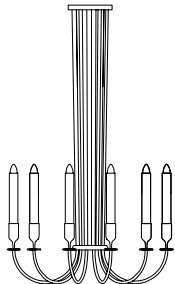
Autoban

Wired King is a cagey elaboration of Autoban's chess-piece-like King lamp, which looks like a lathe-turned wooden table leg zoomed to human size. Wired King retains this industrial-baroque shape but transforms it into a billowing metal armature that rises from the floor to lock up the lampshade. Made for outdoors, its formal inspiration came from its own wireframe CAD renderings.

ZENOVITCH 12 / 24

HOLY TABLE

CLOUD TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: 2010

YEAR OF CREATION: 2009

YEAR OF CREATION: 2011

DIMENSIONS: D.93 cm H.124 / 140 cm

DIMENSIONS: W.240 / 280 cm D.110 cm H.75 cm

DIMENSIONS: W.377 cm D.126.5 cm H.72 cm

MATERIAL: gold-plated and white-painted steel

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut

MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut or marble

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada/Autoban

MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

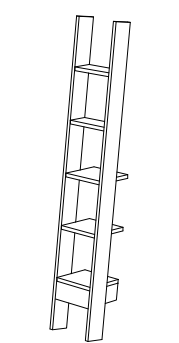
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

Designed and named for the building in which the House Hotel Galatasaray is located, the chandelier reinterprets the historical building in a contemporary light. While the forms were simplified and the rococo flourishes removed, Autoban chose shiny, glamorous materials—brass and chrome—to reinforce the cliché of the opulent chandelier.

Made from solid wooden sections with curved legs and top, the Holy table broadcasts the expertise of the skilled craftsmen who make it. The legs of the table look architectural, while overall, clearly reminiscent of an altar (as Scrub is), Holy actually serves as a clever reinterpretation of the dinner table. The idea, simply, is to turn every dinner party into a ritual.

The Cloud table is the sum of the studio's studies in organic form and pattern. Versatile as a reception desk, conference, or dining table, it emphasizes the sculptural and artistic aspects of design and the architectural lens through which Autoban view furniture making. Cloud is the product of meditations on elliptical shapes. Later, to trace its fine contours in marble, the studio laminated marble surfaces over metal sheets.

LADDER



YEAR OF CREATION: **2006**

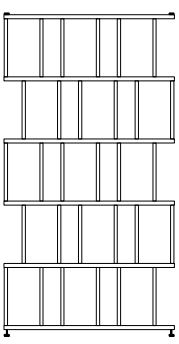
DIMENSIONS: **W.45 cm D.44/50 cm H.205/247.5 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or painted HDF**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

The idea for the Ladder bookcase came from one of the most common, ancient, and clever tools of daily life. Made for Autoban's Galata office, in a century-old building with walls full of historical moldings that they wanted to preserve, it leans against the wall without needing to be mounted to it. The varied depths of its shelves mean that it also suits diverse environments while taking up little space.

REEDY



YEAR OF CREATION: **2009**

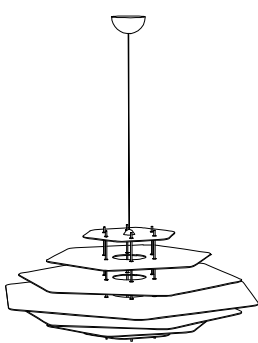
DIMENSIONS: **W.105.5 cm D.35.5 cm H.195 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or painted HDF**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

A modular book shelf, Reedy recalls a stand of tall reeds and echoes the shape of the studio's first architectural project, Nef 163. Autoban needed a reconfigurable, stand-alone bookcase or, for loft-like environments, partitions to define zones in an open-plan room. The result is a shelf that, even when crowded with books, still reveals its structure, but can create and camouflage personal space.

MAGNOLIA



YEAR OF CREATION: **2005**

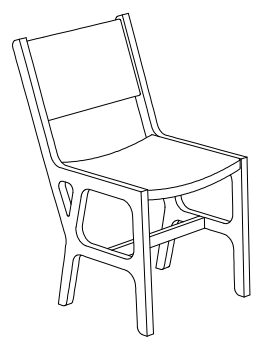
DIMENSIONS: **D.100 cm H.40 cm**

MATERIAL: **Plywood with oak, or walnut veneer**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

In Islamic art and culture, the hexagon, a symbol of heaven used to depict the unity and perfection of the universe, has been used extensively for decorating and in geometric motifs. This pendant consists of stacked hexagonal plates—graduated in size and rotated into unaligned positions—that taper toward the top and bottom of the fixture. In Magnolia, the structure itself becomes the ornament.

KAHVE



YEAR OF CREATION: **2003**

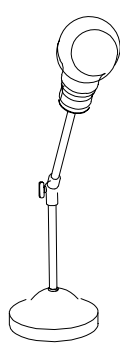
DIMENSIONS: **W.43 cm D.52 cm H.80 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

Modeled on a chair ubiquitous to the Turkish coffeehouse, Kahve looks to the tradition, lost in big cities but not in villages, of the “kahve” or kiraathane, cafés where men sip coffee and çay while playing cards and backgammon. Part of the design series, Funny Ply, the chair's legs and backrest were developed as a single unit that, light and portable, updates an undersung Turkish icon.

LAMBA



YEAR OF CREATION: **2003**

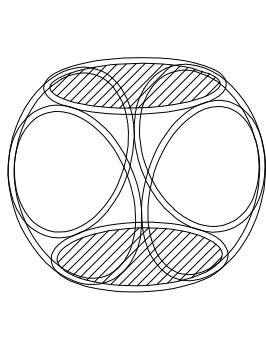
DIMENSIONS: **H.50 cm D.12 cm**

MATERIAL: **Cast-iron base and injection aluminium**

MANUFACTURER: **Autoban**

Lamba's generic name (“lamp” in Turkish) conjures the image of a bulb and cord. This iron-footed table or wall, home, or office fixture came from the Platonic image of a light and objects in Istanbul antique shops—an improvisation born of its location. The proximity of Autoban's Galata office to the historical city, local craftsmen, and diverse materials made for precisely this sort of experiment.

RING SIDE TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: **2007**

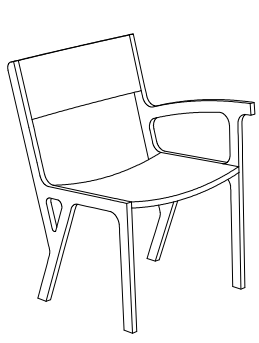
DIMENSIONS: **W.47.5 cm L.47.5 cm H.48 cm**

MATERIAL: **Gold-plated steel with marble or glass top**

MANUFACTURER: **Autoban**

The Ring side table is another example of Autoban turning geometry into glamour. The designers essentially created a large piece of jewelry that celebrates gold as the noble ornamental metal it is. Does Ring table's structure, consisting of six rings of gold-plated steel mirrored in a reflective base, create a setting for the Carrara marble or clear glass tabletop, or is it the other way around?

ONE-ARMED CHAIR



YEAR OF CREATION: **2005**

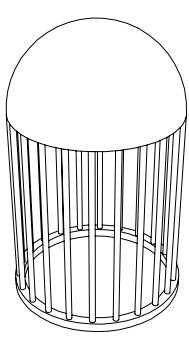
DIMENSIONS: **W.56 cm D.61 cm H.82 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

Answer to the question of how to bring fresh functionality to the common chair, One Armed also responds to the limitations of the two-armed chair (feeling locked in) and the armless chair (where to lean?). Inspired by the seated figure of an old man in a traditional coffee house, because the arm is available on either the right or lefthand side, a pair of chairs can form a bench.

PILL LAMP



YEAR OF CREATION: **2010**

DIMENSIONS: **D.18 cm H.20.5 cm / D.18 cm H.30.5 cm / D.18 cm H.32 cm**

MATERIAL: **Gold-plated or chrome-plated steel**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

Art Deco-inflected but wholly modern, Pill's lozenge silhouette and the shadows cast by its domed cage body are highly graphical and full of glamour. Pill was made for the richly subdued interiors of the House Hotel Bosphorus. Through the use of polished, reflective brass, Autoban gave a nod to what they call “mnemonic materials,” popular in historical Turkish architecture and interiors.

SCRUB TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: **2007**

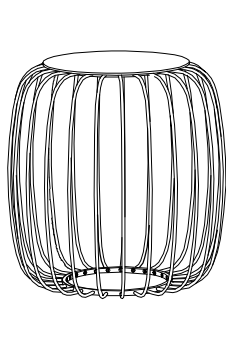
DIMENSIONS: **W.188 cm D.80 cm H.73.5 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

The whimsical legs of this otherwise practical dining table appear to have been uprooted from a garden. Scrub began life as a console designed for a hotel commission to whose rigid lines it offered a soft strength. Autoban shaped it in the spirit of an altar, initially in plywood, with which the studio was playing extensively at the time, and later by De La Espada in oak and walnut.

PUMPKIN STOOL



YEAR OF CREATION: **2004**

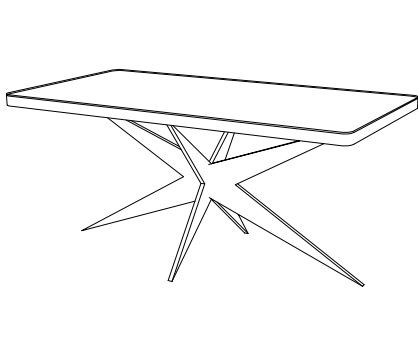
DIMENSIONS: **D.47 cm H.48 cm**

MATERIAL: **Stainless, gold-plated, or painted steel**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

Pumpkin can serve as a coffee table, occasional table, or stool featuring a cage of thin steel rods. To make it, Autoban turned to iron and metal craftsmen near their Galata office. The piece turns structure into decor. The Pill and Wired King lamps, and Tulip and Mushroom Family pieces share its repetitive rod construction.

STARFISH TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: **2003**

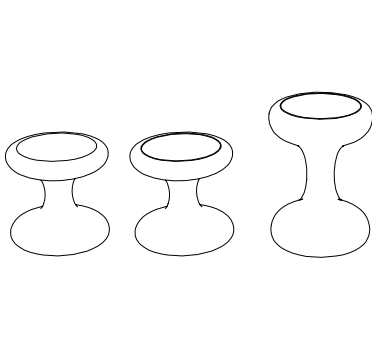
DIMENSIONS: **W.190 cm D.90 cm H.76 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

Autoban's Starfish is a dining table or even a desk that eschews the classical four- or one-legged format. The designers sought a different leg type and settled on a star configuration. Initially, using plywood, they made a solid wood table with sculptural, radiating legs and a bursting personality.

MUSHROOM FAMILY



YEAR OF CREATION: **2006**

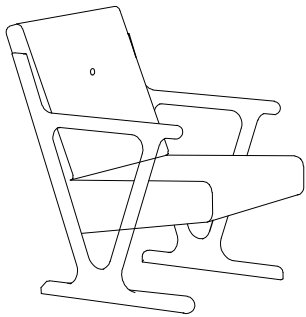
DIMENSIONS: **coffee table: D.41 cm H.40/ 58 cm, stool: D.41 cm H.40 cm**

MATERIAL: **Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather**

MANUFACTURER: **De La Espada**

The Mushroom Family assumes three voluptuous profiles, as coffee tables that support painted glass tops and as stools (sequel to their Pumpkin stool) outfitted with comfy leather cushions. They were inspired by the most primitive form of stool, a tree stump or log, a form that was refined, softened, lightened, and reshaped thoroughly from an Autoban point of view.

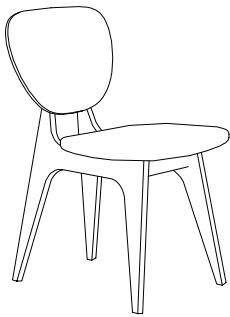
WOODY LOUNGE CHAIR



YEAR OF CREATION: 2007
DIMENSIONS: W.55.5 cm D.77 cm H.87.5 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

Woody’s boldly graphical profile gives a strong form and fresh interest to the lounge chair. It contains echoes of a theater seat, as if its user were watching a performance of everyday life before them. Originally designed for the House Café, its solid clean lines and well-proportioned form give it the air of a much bigger chair—slimmed down.

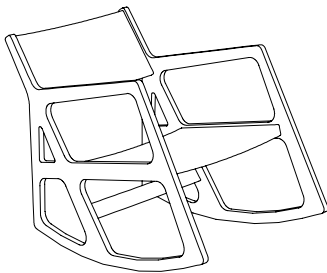
WING CHAIR



YEAR OF CREATION: 2005/2013
DIMENSIONS: W.46 cm D.55 cm H.81 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

Wing chair is a homage to natural materials. The idea was born in 2005, at a time when the studio was beginning to work much more extensively with wood, but became an eight year work-in-progress. Wing’s seat and backrest consist of two separate pieces formed in molds and then joined by way of the chair’s distinctive and emphatically structural legs.

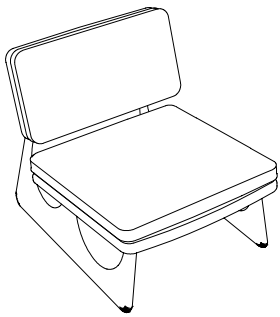
SLEEPY



YEAR OF CREATION: 2003/2005
DIMENSIONS: W.65 cm D.99 cm H.77 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

Graphical and boldfaced, this wooden rocking chair, part of the Funny Ply collection, is rendered, like Sledge and Bergere, in the soft playful spirit of childhood. Long associated with the elderly, the rocking chair has also been more akin to an amusement park ride for the kids. When we grow old, the memory should be rejuvenating. This is the paradox captured in Sleepy’s design.

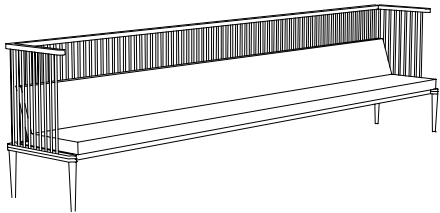
SLEDGE CHAIR



YEAR OF CREATION: 2003/2007
DIMENSIONS: W.64 cm D.80 cm H.62.5 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut with a range of fabrics or leather
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

Autoban drew on childhood memories to imagine the low-slung Sledge chair, a liberally proportioned lounge chair that, while offering a cozy refuge indoors, recalls the pleasure of playing outside on snowy winter days. It dates from a winter when, observing the snow-blanketed streets of Galata from their office, the designers saw “sleds” improvised by kids from plastic bag-covered cardboard.

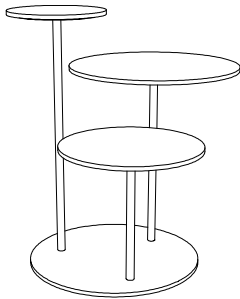
HOUSE SEDIR



YEAR OF CREATION: 2007
DIMENSIONS: H.102.5 cm D.65 cm, W.adjustable
MATERIAL: Oak or walnut with leather or fabric upholstery
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

Designed for the House Café, Sedir, which means couch or divan in Turkish, refines and elevates the notion of a humble wooden bench. The tall backrest, which rises above the upholstered cushion, becomes a reassuring presence behind the sitter. Its slender wooden spindles give the piece a homespun quality, while its fine clean lines make it seem minimalist and modern simultaneously.

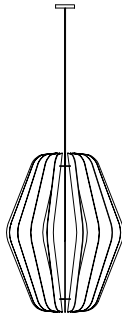
POLY SIDE TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: 2012
DIMENSIONS: W.57.5 cm L.66 cm H.39 / 54 / 69 cm
MATERIAL: Oak, walnut, ash, or chestnut and painted steel
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

The Poly side table was originally used as a bedside table in guest rooms at the House Hotel Bosphorus. It is a wooden piece that is as versatile as it is compact, featuring functional surfaces on multiple levels. Poly has three tiers supported by thin slabs and pillars, and though its form offers strong storage and compositional alternatives to designers, it remains visually lightweight.

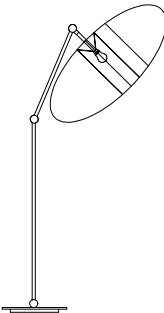
BIG



YEAR OF CREATION: 2005
DIMENSIONS: D.70 cm H.100 cm
MATERIAL: Plywood with oak or walnut veneer
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

This pendant lamp borrows the softened chevron shape of the boomerang, then repeats it in a full circle, while giving it a diffuse day-lit glow via a neon bulb at its core. Playing with layered plywood and geometrical forms, the designers were looking for a way to reach beyond the classic pendant light. The use of a single material and repeated form generated this elegant solution.

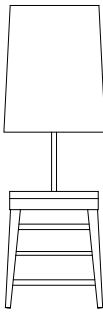
WING LAMP



YEAR OF CREATION: 2010
DIMENSIONS: H.178 cm D.40 cm
MATERIAL: Painted iron with brass or chrome
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

The Wing lamp (unrelated to the studio’s chair of the same name) is a Dali-esque floor light with an iron leg, painted white, and a shade that recalls a melting windmill, propeller, or a bird tilted joyfully on an updraft in mid-flight. This inefficient and unconventional form assumes an aspect of lightness and floating that makes the lamp the protagonist of any interior.

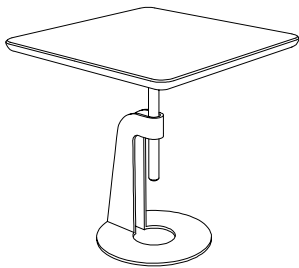
BOOKLAMP



YEAR OF CREATION: 2006
DIMENSIONS: W.56.5 cm D.40 cm H.138 cm
MATERIAL: Oak , walnut, ash, or painted HDF
MANUFACTURER: De La Espada

For all those who read a bit before tucking in for the night, Autoban created a bedside table with space for books or magazines and a glass of water. In combining the light and storage, the designers conflated certain elements of a cliché common to every residential interior (of which the studio was doing a great many at the time): the reading nook composed of two lamp-lit side tables, bookending a comfy chair.

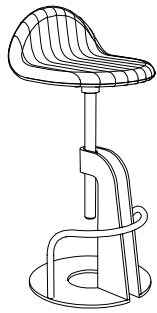
TOOL TABLE



YEAR OF CREATION: 2013
DIMENSIONS: H.73.5 cm D.70 cm W.70 cm
MATERIAL: Powder-coated metal with pinewood
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

The studio designed the small Tool table particularly for a restaurant located in a former printing house, and so its design alludes to the nascently industrial look of the printing presses of a bygone day. This industrial appearance also emphasizes the table’s materiality, aided by the use of a wooden top. The base looks like a thick vice into which the leg of the table is tightly clamped.

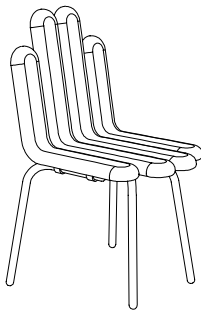
BOB BAR STOOL



YEAR OF CREATION: 2013
DIMENSIONS: H.90 cm D.40.5 cm W.40 cm
MATERIAL: Powder-coated metal with fabric or leather upholstery
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

This bar stool, created for a restaurant interior, was an investigation into techniques used by traditional upholstery craftsmen. It combines these techniques with an industrial look and the contemporary aesthetics of metalsmithing. A simple folding upwards of the circular seat forms the low backrest and the base resembles a vice into which the leg of the stool is clamped.

LADYFINGER CHAIR



YEAR OF CREATION: 2013
DIMENSIONS: H.87.5 cm D.52.5 cm W.56 cm
MATERIAL: Powder-coated metal with fabric or leather upholstery
MANUFACTURER: Autoban

Designed for the formally and texturally engaging Gaspar restaurant, this chair’s backrest resembles a handful of madeleines. One of the studio’s archetypical furnishings, based on the material’s curvilinearity, it recalls work by Joe Colombo, both modernist and snug. A handful of repeated upholstered elements are complimented with a simple welded metal profile that takes their geometry as its guide.