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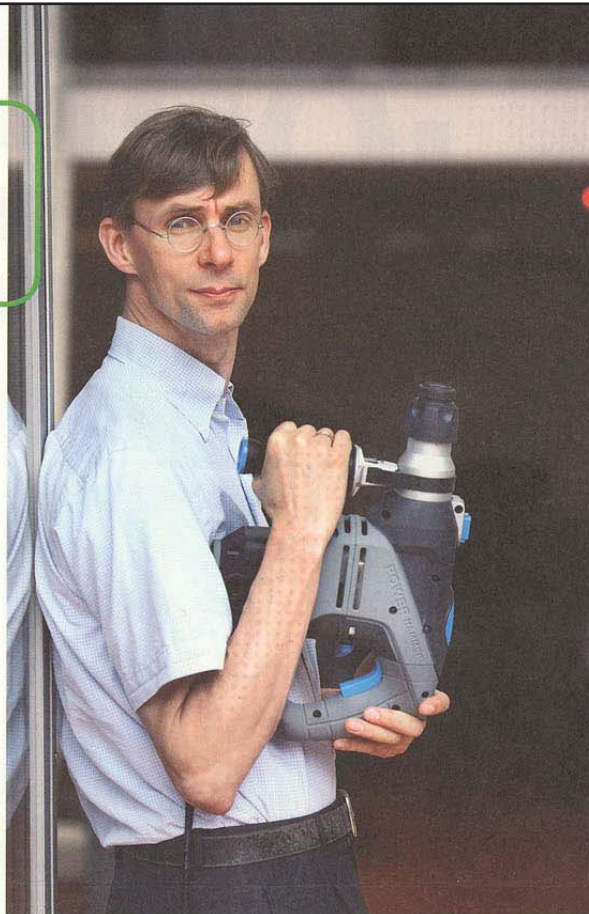
Michiel Meurs (48)

studied at IDE from 1978-1984.

He started working for Isthia industrial design before founding his own office in 1988 with Michiel Brandes. His founding-partner left the office in 1995 to continue

a career as a composer and musician.

In May 2008, Meurs published a retrospect called 'Form Follows Vision': twenty years of Brandes en Meurs designs and a peek into the future of design.



Another example is our design of a new mailbox for PTT (Dutch Post, currently TNT). After we had won a competition, it turned out that a division of PTT had just ordered a new mold for the existing Friso Kramer design."

What did you like or dislike about IDE when you studied in Delft?

„I was very much inspired by the combination of theory and practice and I liked making prototypes with fellow students. Studying at IDE, you didn't need a student fraternity to meet people. On the other hand, I believe there was too much focus on mathematics and physics. I wanted to learn more about the basics of a good design. I decided to go studying in Canada for a year, at Carleton University. I made more designs in one year than I did in five years at IDE."

Do you notice any changes compared to your time at IDE?

„A big change is that design has become more and more popular. You can see that in the number of students and in the newspapers. When I started my studies, my father collected every article about design. He had to use his scissors only about seven times a year! Another change concerns the attitude of students. When I taught at IDE for a year in the late eighties I noticed a change in attitude. When I studied at IDE, we had a seventies spirit of trying to make a better world by improving everyday design. I then saw first year students, with no design experience, adopting the image of a star designer. They talked about design in a certain way and even stuck the right brand of pencils in their pockets to suit the image."

Could you name some of the Brandes en Meurs designs that we encounter in daily life?

„We have designed a lot of tools, such as the pistol grip Skil screwdriver. It received the Dutch design prize 2006. We are currently designing a series of tools for a competing brand: Ferm. Designs for public transport constitute another big part of our portfolio, for example the purple chairs in Dutch double-deck trains. Since 2001 we have been developing such projects in a partnership called From AtoB. We've developed the concepts for the Zuid-tangent and the Interliner buses and the bus stops in Tilburg."

When I think of this train interior I think of the orange bins that are too narrow, hard to open...

„...and easily unload on the floor. It's true. However, they're not our design. We only designed the chairs. I think the best part of the chair is the ashtray: casted aluminium fitting smoothly into the armrest. Smoking is not allowed nowadays, but the ashtrays are still the jewelry of these chairs."

What was your graduation project?

„A garden chair, made of SMC, a synthetic material. The chair could be adjusted

in a special, patented way, giving it a wide range of positions: from upright to a flat stretcher. The company made a prototype and was about to start production when they received a big commission from Renault. Instead of manufacturing my chair, they decided to make bumpers and panels."

Frustrating?

„It's part of the business. Our retrospect shows other examples. One of our first commissions was a register device for road pricing, placed in the interior of the car. Today, nineteen years later, road pricing still hasn't been implemented.

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Purple chairs in Dutch double-deck trains.



The pistol grip Skil screwdriver.