

INEKE HANS:

I met the guys from OFFECCT when I was Guest of Honour at the Stockholm Furniture Fair in 2009. We got on very well, which is often a decisive factor for me before I embark on any new projects. On both sides, it's important to understand each other's direction and share a mutual respect.

I was asked to design a new *Soundwave* wall panel to join the existing collection. From the outset, OFFECCT imposed two restrictions: the panel must be produced according to predetermined dimensions and must be made from recycled plastic (PET) material. I quite enjoy restrictions because it's rather like I am working to complete a very difficult puzzle.

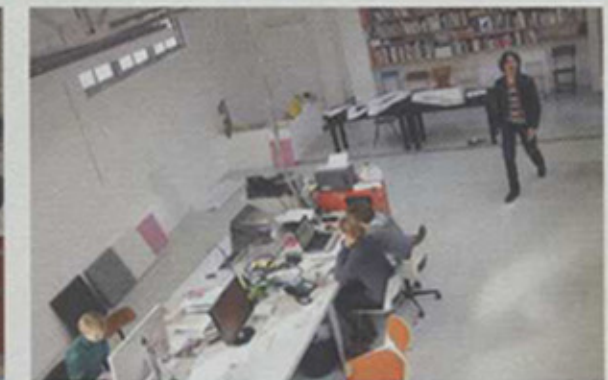
I started by exploring what would look nice on the wall. If you study wall decoration, you soon realise that there is a lot of it all over the world, even if we have wanted to get rid of it since the Bauhaus! Furthermore, a lot of the decoration is very geometrical: for example, if you go to the north of Sweden, or some places in Spain, or parts of the Arabic world, you often encounter very geometric design. So, I decided that I would like to work on a geometric pattern for the panel, giving these shapes some depth and height.

The angled pattern of my final design, called *Geo*, is both decorative as well as functional: the surfaces absorb and direct sounds into different directions, fulfilling the panel's primary function as a sound absorber.

The panel can work individually or in a single row. Additionally, if you cluster a lot of them together, then other patterns seem to emerge. Shown in multiples, you can create a bolder presence in a room with the decorative elements becoming ever more expressive. At the same time, maybe because of the geometric angles, the panel is also quite architectural.

In general, I have a love/hate relationship with decoration. I'm normally pretty straight in things: if it doesn't serve any purpose, why should I do it? On the one hand, I can't say that decoration serves a specific purpose; but on the other hand, I do believe it's good for your brain. There is such a thing as 'mental functionality.' This is something that I hope we all become more aware of in design: the human factor.

Ineke Hans is based in Arnhem, the Netherlands





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