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Lighting design is all over the place, as it were. But surely that’s how it should be. No matter where one is located, there is enough reason for lights to be designed and enough design fairs for staging the worthy wares. Those involved in the thick of it, such as company heads and their chosen designers, are fascinated by the intercultural spread, as much as by aesthetics, technology, and new markets.

## To the Ends of the World

Is design going global, or do local roots and traditional inspiration still count? Trying to perform a litmus test on the culture of the design world and map the waves of the creative lighting culture is tricky. “There are few spots worldwide where young designers can achieve some visibility: Milan is first on the list, the place where the world of design meets once-a-year in April. Other such places are London and Taipei in September, Tokyo in November, and Dubai in March, together with Design Days Dubai”, says Cyril Zammit, director of the new Dubai fair that aims to gather the attention and creative forces of the Middle East. “Every design event should be an answer to a local need. The number of fairs will grow naturally as design impacts our lives both aesthetically and practically. So far, each design fair has found its own identity and offers a selection of design galleries relevant to its market.”

Which are the best spots for a lighting designer? “For certain works, the right place will in time be the Far East, but in the end, designing good products is more important than living the right city”, claims Luca Nichetto, an Italian designer who works alongside several European companies. His most recent collaboration is with Zero, of Sweden. “Lighting design is the sign of a united Europe. Italian lighting companies work with European designers a lot. Even if every country possesses a particular skill in something specific, such as technology, office lamps, or emotive atmospheres, I can really say that a European style is growing”, enthuses Federico Palazzari, CEO of Nemo. It is important not to stay in one place forever but rather to become a nomadic designer. “Keep on moving: a bit of Milan, New York, Paris, London. That’s the only way to grow and become a real world citizen”, proclaims Lorenzo Truant, creative director at Axolight.

Designers should walk the world like surfers looking for the best wave, in the words of Alessandro Vecchiato, co-founder of Foscarini, who suggests a six-months-per-city strategy for creating contacts. “The geopolitical face of lighting design is becoming atomised, with spores moving all over the world”, explains Truant. “The best place for design and designers in 2013 is anywhere on the periphery”, says

Omer Abel, designer and chairman at Bocci. “Not London. Not New York. Not Milan.”

Maps, feelings, and forma mentis change according to eyes of the beholder. “To map is to lie”, states Antonis Antoniou in the preface to the book A map of the world (Gestalten), a collection of graphics and illustrations by a new generation of original and sought-after designers, illustrators, and mapmakers who draw the world as they see and experience it, from small city blocks to continents. These ‘heretical’ maps might be the best way to understand and navigate the world, especially the creative world. Now that there are no blind spots left and Google Maps and GPS systems have become our navigational tools of choice, the best contemporary maps are becoming those of illustrators, as per experimental data visualisation and personal visual storytelling.

But in a global market, can people understand each other when talking about aesthetic preferences and emotional features? After all, there are different design cultures and heritage strands in the world. “In the Far East, many people do not know who Castiglioni is”, states Italian designer Ferruccio Laviani. “Differences in the way of perceiving and confronting lighting are not only found between China and Europe but also between Napoli and Milan. These new players are becoming more and more important for business. They have a strong cultural identity and a different way of living that will be soon mixed with outside influences”, says Piero Gandini, chairman at Flos. According to Oki Sato, founder of Nendo, European design, especially that of Italian designers, has a more widely varied colour palette than that of Japanese designers. “But I believe Japanese people can use black and white better, as well as the gradation from light to shadow.” Local inspiration still counts for a lot. The award-winning WWwas conceived and designed in La Neuveville, a village of forty thousand inhabitants in Switzerland. “In the middle of nowhere, surrounded by beauty: we do not want to be anywhere else. We prefer travelling when we need to”, announces Patrick Reymond of design collective, Atelier Oi. “The contemporary designer needs to travel a great deal. For me, a creative place is where I do not get too distracted”, designer Daniel Rybakken articulates. <

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The latest object by NOSIGNER, which appears to be a sun, is a new mirror installation for the Taro Horiuchi Spring and Summer collection. The concept of the collection was inspired by ‘Sun and Blood’. “In realising the concept, we used electronically controllable LED technology, allowing organic light to be projected, referring to the sun’s corona. The diffused light is created by a special kind of aluminium foil that allows it to reflect varying patterns, so that you will never see the same one on the wall. The title of the work was named after the perfect solar eclipse that will appear in about 200 years. This installation will now become a permanent fixture at the Taro Horiuchishop, where it will be used as a mirror and an artwork. Photo: NOSIGNER

# Productivity

## 1. ICICLE

*Jiangmei Wu*

Folded from 20 triangles, with an LED providing warm, bright light.  
[www.foldedlightart.com](http://www.foldedlightart.com)

## 4. INHALE LAMP

*Nendo*

Blown glass in the form of an air bubble with the air sucked away,  
[www.lasvit.com](http://www.lasvit.com)

## 3. YUPIK

*Form Us With Love*

A portable lamp with a polypropylene foam body.  
[www.fontanaarte.com](http://www.fontanaarte.com)

## 4. NEVERENDING GLORY COLLECTION

*Jan Plechac & Henry Wielgus*

These lamps reflect nostalgic emotions and interpret opulent candle chandeliers in new ways, symbolising prime moments of appreciation and glory. In the individual silhouettes it is possible to recognise iconic chandeliers from five of the world's most eminent concert halls and theatres: La Scala in Milan, Palais Garnier in Paris, the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, and the Estates Theatre in Prague.  
[www.lasvit.com](http://www.lasvit.com)

## 5. STRING LIGHTS

*Michael Anastassiades*

"Every time I take the train, I sit by the window and watch the series of perfectly parallel strings connecting the pylons, as we move at high speed..."  
[www.flos.com](http://www.flos.com)

## 6. WIREFLOW

*Arik Levy*

A contemporary reinterpretation of classical luminaires created by using just two elementary components: a thin black rod and LED lamps. The result is ethereal and sculptural, geometric and fluid.  
[www.vibia.com](http://www.vibia.com)

## 7. TYBALT

*Harry Allen*

[www.swarovski.com](http://www.swarovski.com)

## 8. SUPERNOVA F

A white upright on a white, circular base. The top, set at an angle of 90°, is connected by a quick-release attachment to a white, semi-transparent disc, the signature of the Supernova range.  
[www.deltalight.com](http://www.deltalight.com)



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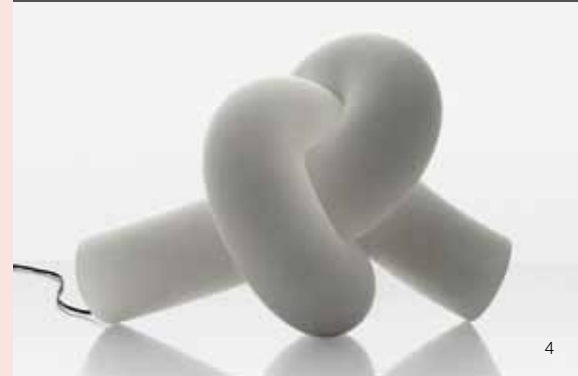
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## 1. LAGUNA

*Matteo Thun & Antonio Rodriguez*

The milky-white blown glass with crystal nuances produces soft spot lighting nearby and high-performance lighting throughout the surroundings.  
[www.artemide.com](http://www.artemide.com)

## 2. FUJI

*Cédric Ragot*

A lamp inside a lacquered frame with LED light source.  
[www.rochebobo.com](http://www.rochebobo.com)

## 3. PARTICULE ELEMENTAIRE

*Matali Crasset*

An installation designed by Matali Crasset to represent Danese at the 6th Triennale Design Museum in Milan. The objective was to interpret Danese's contemporary design concepts to best represent its DNA: simplicity, care for man and the environment, material innovation, technological and gender research, perceptual and sensory properties.  
[www.danese milano.com](http://www.danese milano.com)

## 4. KNOT

*Ingo Maurer & team*

A sculptural table lamp made using 3D printing technology.  
[www.ingo-maurer.com](http://www.ingo-maurer.com)

## 5. TWEETER

An extremely manoeuvrable lamp for directional lighting in the garden, in the shape of a wall fitting or on a post.  
[www.deltalight.com](http://www.deltalight.com)

## 6. THE SPHERE

*Katja Pettersson*

A study of light phenomena; an experiment in refraction. The result is a prototype, a solid globe of glass that sharpens the beam and generates a more concentrated light than the light source itself.

Photo: Patrik Lindvall  
[www.katjapettersson.com](http://www.katjapettersson.com)

## 7. FULL MOON

*Cédric Ragot*

An LED lamp in lacquered metal.  
[www.rochebobo.com](http://www.rochebobo.com)

## 8. N=N/03

*Nendo = Nichetto*

A paper ice cream lamp that comes in different shapes and colours. A project realised together with Foscarini and Taniguchi; aoya washi. Photo: Hiroshi Iwasaki  
[www.nendo.jp](http://www.nendo.jp)  
[www.lucanichetto.com](http://www.lucanichetto.com)