

After a three-year refurbishment programme, owner Sonia Diniz has relaunched São Paulo's groundbreaking design store Firma Casa as a spacious gallery showcasing the best of Brazil's contemporary art and design scene. At the helm of the transformation project were local practice SuperLimão and top Brazilian exports, the Campana brothers.

Diniz has quite a history with the Campanas. 'I met them right around the time I was launching Firma Casa in 1994, and thought they were really talented,' she says. 'I carried their first product line, and when they began designing for Edra, I committed to carrying all of their work – even though at the time, many Brazilians were more inclined to buy knock-offs of great design than import the real thing. We grew up together professionally. Today, Brazil has changed. People pay for quality and appreciate talent – it's due in large part to the success of the Campanas, and it's helped Firma Casa too.'

Working with SuperLimão, the brothers have designed a new signature façade for Firma Casa. 'Our father was an agronomic engineer, who worked with Rio's famous Jardim Botânico at one time,' they explain. Inspired by his work, they've created a 'living' façade made of thousands of vases hanging from light aluminium wire, and planted with over 9,000 snake plants, known locally as Swords of Saint George.

Inside, SuperLimão has created an open-plan space supported by steel-reinforced concrete beams, from which furniture is sometimes cleverly suspended using industrial-strength magnets. *Alameda Gabriel Monteiro da Silva 1487, Jardim Paulistano, www.firmacasa.com.br*



Green light

A fresh start for São Paulo's Firma Casa boutique

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A NEW LEAF

From left, Humberto and Fernando Campana; Sonia Diniz, sitting in one of the designers' 'Favela' chairs; the SuperLimão team: Thiago Rodrigues, Lula Gouveia, Sérgio Cabral, Antonio Carlos Figueira de Mello and Fuca the Boston terrier

INCOMING

BY JOHN WEICH

MEET & SEAT

Social seating, once an awkward phenomenon confined to the dining room, has become the new catchphrase in airline travel. This is because everyone from Malaysian Airlines and KLM to Ticketmaster is offering 'seat buddy' services, an opt-in amenity that allows passengers to peek into the social media profiles of their fellow flyers and tailor-pick their seatmates, both parties willing, of course. Considering that the majority of in-flight complaints these days involve seat real-estate (neighbours too close for comfort), the matchmaking service is a viable solution that could save airlines both call-centre nitpicking and flight-attendant headaches. But before proponents of air-troductions tweet too loudly, remember: the airline cabin is one of the last remaining refuges where you don't have to worry about being 'Liked'.

DESIGN



SCRUB UP NICELY
Part of Hay's new 'Wood' range, which is made of beech, maple and oak

BRUSH HOUR

Danish design company Hay has been on our go-to list for contemporary Scandinavian design since it was founded in 2002. We've lapped up its seating (see W*137), tables, storage boxes, and bright textiles by Scholten & Baijings. Now the Horsens-based design house has an irresistible collection of domestic accessories: a mixture of kitchen utensils, laundry pegs and hangers, stationery, office and grooming tools, and trays of all dimensions and finishes. A combination of in-house and commissioned designs alongside hunted and gathered pieces, it's a brilliant, coherent collection of small-scale essentials. Straight off, we're clearing space for the wooden combs and backscrubs.

Large square tray, £85. Clockwise from left, hair brushes, £22 each; comb, £19; nail brush, £5; scrubbing glove, £13; back scrubber, £26; small comb, £12; large comb, £19; toothbrushes, £10 each, part of the 'Wood' range, all by Hay, www.hay.dk