In Gela, Sicily, with its 80,000 inhabitants, hundreds of illegal buildings have been constructed, resulting in a town that looks like an encampment.

The space I see is incomprehensible. The space in which I live is not a modern city; it is only a porno shop with a few people.
ETTORE SOTTASSE RITRATTI DI COPIA PORTRAITS OF PAIRS
Mobili che accolgono l'indecisione che c'è nel mondo.
Sottsass definisce così i pezzi disegnati
con Elena Cutolo per la Galleria Ernest Mourmans
Furniture that embodies the indecision that exists in the world.
This is how Sottsass describes the pieces
designed with Elena Cutolo for Ernest Mourmans' Gallery
Nelle pagine precedenti, due mobili realizzati nel 2004: In legno di bocote, con dimensioni cm 239 x 221 x 240h (a sinistra), e in legno di cocobolo con base in corian, con dimensioni cm 160 x 50 x 260h

Previous pages, two pieces produced in 2004: made of bocote wood, 239 x 221 x 240h cm (left), and of cocobolo wood with corian base, dimensions 160 x 50 x 260h cm

In queste pagine, mobili realizzati nel 2005: in alluminio patinato e legno di pern finitura ebano, nelle dimensioni cm 150 x 45 x 200h (a sinistra); in alluminio, legno di pern finitura ebano, macassar, nelle dimensioni cm 150 x 60 x 210h

These pages, pieces produced in 2005: made of patinated aluminium and ebonised pear wood, 150 x 45 x 200h cm (left); aluminium, ebonized pearwood, macassar, 150 x 60 x 210h cm
In queste pagine, mobili realizzati nel 2003: in legno tamo della Manziaria, profili in frassino, acrilico, nelle dimensioni cm 175 x 45 x 208h (a sinistra); in legno di noce del Kirghizistan, profili in legno di noce, acrilico, laminato Abet, nelle dimensioni cm 370 x 160 x 205h

These pages, pieces produced in 2003: made of manchurian tamo wood, ash borders, acrylic, 175 x 45 x 208h cm (left); bur of Kyrgyzstan walnut, walnut borders, acrylic, abet laminate, 370 x 160 x 205 cm
In alto: schizzi di Ettore Sottsass per i mobili realizzati nel 2005.
In basso e nella pagina accanto: schizzi per i mobili realizzati nel 2004.

Top: sketches by Ettore Sottsass for the pieces produced in 2005.
Below and opposite page: sketches for the pieces produced in 2004.
SB: You have used a large mix of materials and brought planes and materials together very differently in these pairs of pieces for Ernest Mourmans...

ES: Yes, I have. My present concern is to design objects with no set “biological” or cultural boundaries. Objects that are somehow unstable and embody the indecision that exists in the world. For instance, the aggregation of this piece develops obliquely to the base; this other one has just the odd “crooked” element; this one has a more traditional basic structure — straight in relation to the plane — but the inner units are suspended instead of resting on the base; this other one is a combination of cubes that do not, however, have the same matrix...

SB: Yet, these pairs speak to each other: what holds them together?

ES: All the furniture in this collection develops on a constantly changing symmetrical axis...

SB: ...and according to a principle of anti-gravitation, based on a stable pattern.

ES: Yes, but the symmetry always breaks down in this furniture... I cause it to break down as much as I can, partly because I believe the modern world no longer has any symmetrical axes and is totally unstable... and I am also convinced that, today, we are no longer searching for a solution, except for a religious or sacred one...

SB: Is there no longer a thread to life?

ES: If anything, the thread is the mass of thoughts and feelings we produce when we wonder about the meaning of the contemporary world... we are always trying to catch up, to understand what is happening. It is not a case of staying young but of remaining in a state of tension with the world.