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MICHELANGELO PISTOLETTO
THE REINSTATED APPLE



RICH SITTINGS

At Nendo's Tokyo HQ (the team also has an office in Milan), designer Oki Sato sits in the 'Diamond' chair. Based on the atomic structure of a diamond, it is made using a form of 3D laser printing that Nendo will use for its installation for Lexus at this year's Salone. Clockwise, from front, 'Ribbon' stool, for Cappellini; 'Switch' lamp, for Oluce; 'Tetris' table, for De Padova

NENDO ▲ 2003

Oki Sato, the 30-year-old designer who heads up Nendo — one of Japan's most dynamic design offices — has had a special relationship with Milan ever since he first went there in 2002. Fresh out of Waseda University's prestigious architecture school — where he topped the class — Sato went to the Italian city to experience his first Salone. 'What I saw in Milan changed everything for me. My teachers were quite strict, but when I went to Milan I saw that everyone was designing things very freely,' he says.

The same show also made Sato feel that Milan would be prepared to take him seriously as a young Japanese designer. 'I saw a large portrait of Tokujin Yoshioka (Wallpaper's 2008 Furniture Designer of the Year), who was still in his thirties at the time, next to a portrait of Philippe Starck. I was so surprised, because Yoshioka was a Japanese designer, up

there with Starck. That day I made up my mind to exhibit at the Salone.'

On returning to Tokyo, Sato and the Nendo team began work on a collection of products for Milan for the following year. In 2003, they displayed five new pieces at Satellite. Only the 'Manhole Cushion' made it into production, but Nendo returned to the Satellite in 2004 with five more pieces. Swedese picked up the 'Wind' stool, while Cappellini also spotted the designers and went on to make their 'Yuki' screen, 'Ribbon' stool and 'Island' table.

This year is Nendo's sixth Salone and — with product launches for Cappellini, De Padova, Council and Guzzini, and a showroom design for car manufacturer Lexus — it seems Milan takes these Japanese designers very seriously indeed. Gordon Kanki Knight
www.nendo.jp