

THE INNOVATIVE LIFESTYLE RENDEZ-VOUS

P R E S S K I T



Biocement, Friedrich Gerlach & Julia Huhnholz ©DR

MAISON & OBJET

NEW & NOW



**MAISON&OBJET,
SEPTEMBER 2025
RISING TALENT
AWARDS —
GERMANY**



Silo Swing, Studio OE © Julia Sang Nguyen

GERMANY'S CREATIVE LEGACY OF PRECISION, FUNCTIONALITY AND METICULOUS ARTISTRY CONTINUES

Over the decades, Germany's heritage of design innovation, state-of-the-art manufacturing, detailed precision and superior functionality has given it the status of being one of the most influential and well-regarded regions within the design sector. Home to pivotal movements such as the Bauhaus and the Werkbund, which shaped the future of design for generations to come, that iconic legacy is set to continue thanks to a strengthening pool of emerging talent who are paying homage to this history while reinterpreting the region's core design values for a contemporary global audience.

For the 2025 edition of the Rising Talent Awards, Maison&Objet is putting the spotlight onto a selection of these visionary talents representing the region. Situated in the show's Design District, a future-focused Trend Observatory, the exhibition is curated in collaboration with Paris Design Week Factory. Placing boldness and experimentation at its forefront, the Design District asserts its role as a dynamic incubator of creativity, with other flagship initiatives on display such as Future on Stage, Maison&Objet Factory, the Accor Design Awards and a curated showcase of 60 exclusive next-generation brands.



Traktor Chair, Haus Otto © Julia Sang Nguyen

Addressing current global topics, while blending it with a sensitive curiosity and appreciation for materials, the final shortlist has been carefully selected by an expert panel of jurors. With the core values of the German design scene embedded within their practice, these designs present a vision that offers a glimpse into its evolution going forward, resulting in an exquisite blend of heritage and modernity.

THE JURY

Harnessing the knowledge of established industry leaders from across the region, this year's jury features experts from a diverse range of creative practices. Through meticulous research and consideration, the final nominees stood out through purpose-led design values and thought-leading, visionary creativity.

Speaking of the awards, jury member **Sebastian Herkner** comments, *"It is an amazing opportunity for young designers to present their unique design philosophy to an international audience. I can say from experience that these platforms are an important parameter for the careers of creative people."*

Fellow jury member **Eva Marguerre** was moved by the designers' ability to tackle issues of sustainability and resource conservation, while **Hanne Willmann** says, *"I look forward to the future, excited by the creativity and vision they will bring to the world."*

Characterised with a focus on the future of design, **Carsten Wiewiorra** was impressed how the young talents utilised the possibilities of the digital age, through AI and 3D printing, helping to cast their ideas in more sustainable forms. **Juliette Nickel** felt honoured to nominate these incredible designers, many of whom she has watched grow over the last five years. *"Supporting emerging talent has always been close to my heart,"* she says. *"We urgently need initiatives like this to strengthen and celebrate the independent design scene. It creates visibility, momentum, and community for the next generation of creatives."*

Stéphane Galerneau, President of Ateliers d'Art de France, nominated the Rising Talent Craft Award and endorsed the selection.



Turn, Moritz Walter © DR



Lumo, Friedrich Gerlach © DR

THE JURY

A person is sitting on a light-colored wooden stool. They are wearing a white t-shirt and dark grey jeans. A black, circular cushion is placed on the stool's seat, and the person's right leg is resting on it. The person's hands are clasped in their lap. The background is a plain, light grey.

**RISING
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LUTZ DIETZOLD

The CEO of the German Design Council, Lutz Dietzold is also on the board of the Mia Seeger Foundation and the German Design Museum Foundation.

“These designers show that design shapes not just objects, but values—and with them, the way we choose to live and shape the world around us.”



© Jakob Boemer



© Gaby Gerster

SEBASTIAN HERKNER

A renowned multidisciplinary designer, Sebastian Herkner has developed an array of products for global brands, winning him an accolade of international awards

“The Rising Talent Awards at Maison&Objet is an amazing possibility for young designers to present their unique design philosophy to an international audience. I can say from experience that these platforms are an important parameter for the career of creative people.”

EVA MARGUERRE

Co-Founder of Studio Besau-Marguerre, Eva Marguerre’s work spans the fields of product design, visual communication, styling and interior design.

“The research on young designers was exciting: It’s impressive how they work with energy on projects and tackle issues like sustainability and resource conservation.”



© DR



© Pauline Fernandez

JULIETTE NICKEL

Co-Founder of Fabrikat89 and online retailer NAVE, Juliette Nickel is a creative entrepreneur specialising in future-focused pop-up retail concepts

“It was an honour to nominate so many incredible designers — many of whom I’ve had the privilege to watch grow over the past five years. Supporting emerging talent has always been close to my heart. We urgently need initiatives like this to strengthen and celebrate the independent design scene — they create visibility, momentum, and community for the next generation of creatives.”



© Daniel Sonnentag

CARSTEN WIEWIORRA

An interior architect and President of the BDIA, Carsten Wiewiorra is also a professor of design, construction and materials at Detmold School of Design.

“The Rising Talent Awards are characterized by their focus on the future of design: the young talents use today’s possibilities of the digital age, such as AI and 3D printing, to cast their ideas in more sustainable forms.”



© Florian Reimann

HANNE WILLMANN

An award-winning, multidisciplinary designer working on global projects within the fields of industrial design, product design and design consultancy.

“It is an honor to assess such talented designers for the Rising Talents Award Germany. I look forward to the future, excited by the creativity and vision they will bring to the world.”



© DR

STÉPHANE GALERNEAU

An interior architect, designer and the founder of Création Galant, Stéphane Galerneau has also been the President of Ateliers d'Art de France since 2022.

“Gabriel Tarmassi’s work, centred on wooden sculptures, explores nature and human intervention. The artisan celebrates the material by highlighting the uniqueness of a tree transformed into a sculpture.”

THE TALENTS



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FRIEDRICH GERLACH

Driven by a curiosity for progressive materials and novel production methods, the German designer bridges innovation, sustainability and technology. Creating objects shaped by processes of bacterial growth to additive manufacturing, his thought-provoking work aims to challenge conventional norms and standards. He explores how innovation can reshape aesthetics, function and sustainability, drawing on scientific insight to guide his creativity. For Gerlach, production is not just fabrication, but a narrative embedded within the object itself.

M&O: What is the mission that lies behind your creative practice?

Friedrich Gerlach: *“I often work with materials and processes that are still in early development and not yet part of everyday applications. My aim is to translate these into tangible images and experimental prototypes that make their potential visible. Many existing innovations already offer answers to today’s ecological and social challenges, but they often remain hidden in research environments. Through design, I try to make them accessible and relatable – to open new ways of thinking about production and material use. It’s about making research perceptible through design.”*



What drives the curiosity behind the materials you select and work with?

F.G.: *“Many products are still created without considering what happens to them at the end of their lifecycle. I like to challenge these production systems and rethink them from a different angle. In a world where increasing consumption generates more leftover materials, I see these not as waste, but as valuable resources. I find it exciting to work with what’s already there – designing in a way that anticipates transformation, reuse, or even disappearance. There’s also a lot to learn from nature, whether it’s circular systems or microscopic strategies that already provide solutions – we just need to understand them.”*



Mobile Sauna, Friedrich Gerlach & Emil Löber & Sophia Reissenweber © DR



Biocement, Friedrich Gerlach & Julia Huhnholz © DR



Biotic Boot, Friedrich Gerlach © DR

GERLACH & HEILIG

Founded by Kyra Heilig and Lenn Heilig, the Amsterdam-based studio originally began in the Black Forest before relocating. Grounded in research of the cultural and historical layers that shape objects and techniques, the design duo works across objects and furniture as well as conceptual installations. Collaborating with external partners throughout each project, the studio's inherent curiosity results in striking material and process explorations.

M&O: As a duo, how do you combine your creativity within each project?

Gerlach & Heilig: *"Each project begins with in-depth conversations where we share and challenge each other's perspectives. This constant exchange ensures we approach our work from a holistic and thoughtful standpoint, considering not just aesthetics, but the deeper narratives that shape our ideas. We often go for long walks together to discuss concepts. There is something about being away from immediate pressures, clearing our minds and allowing ideas to flow. As our partnership is an ongoing process of learning and growth, we've developed an intuitive understanding of each other."*



© Florence Nienhaus

M&O: Does each project begin with a material in mind and how does the creative process work?

G&H: *"The relationship between material and concept is rarely a linear one. It is never just an aesthetical choice for us, as materials express the deeper narratives and ideas embedded in our work. Sometimes a project starts with a specific material whilst in other instances, the concept we're engaging with will dictate the materials we choose. For us, it is about experimenting with curiosity to see where the material itself leads us. It's a kind of open-ended investigation, where it guides us as much as we shape it. This dynamic exchange fosters outcomes that aim to feel organic and intentional.."*



Hammered Scapes, Gerlach & Heilig © Kyra&Lenn



Traditional Heritage, Gerlach & Heilig © Kyra&Lenn



Traditional Heritage, Gerlach & Heilig © Lipp Zahnschirm

HAUS OTTO

Established by Patrick Henry Nagel and Nils Körner, Haus Otto is a Stuttgart-based design studio focusing on object and spatial design and creative direction. Through transformative and humorous interventions, the duo address both the environmental and contextual aspects of contemporary design, investigating its place in relation to the wider ecosystem surrounding each application. In 2023, they initiated the FARM project in cooperation with eight emerging artists and designers at the organic Farm Rimpertsweiler near lake Constance in Germany.

M&O: Where do you find inspiration and what do you hope viewers feel when witnessing your work?

Haus Otto: *"We have multiple inspiration sources from a new book to an exhibition, being in nature or even simple everyday conversations. Art and pop culture also play a significant role in our inspiration, particularly how they mutually influence and nourish design. For example, the Fluxus movement or radical design movement born in Italy in the 60s have had a profound impact on us. We hope that our work then goes on to surprise audiences, evoke an emotional connection and, at best, start a conversation."*



© Julia Sang Nguyen

M&O: Sustainability lies at the heart of what you do. How is it intrinsic within your practice?

H.O.: *"We believe we must think about products within a much wider context. Not only what they look like but what materials are used, how they are sourced and what happens to them at end of life. This can cover how products are disassembled to be reused or recycled, as well as the communication around them and the context in which they are displayed. We are also trying to create new networks for companies to share assets, services and resources, moving us closer to a sharing economy that not only reduces costs but also encourages greater exchange within the sector."*



Stair Shelf, Haus Otto © Julia Sang Nguyen



Zoom Rug, Haus Otto © Julia Sang Nguyen



EN312, Haus Otto © Julia Sang Nguyen

MARIE LUISE STEIN

Graduating in 2022 with a degree in Product and Communication Design from HfG Karlsruhe, Berlin-based designer Marie Luise Stein has gone on to develop concepts for products, interiors and retail environments. Guided by modular principles and a sensitive approach to materials, Stein's work exudes an elevated contemporary aesthetic while paying close attention to values of circularity and longevity.

M&O: Working across spatial and product design, do both disciplines feed into each other and are products guided by spaces you create?

Marie Luise Stein: *"I'd describe it more as a natural interconnection. For me, design always unfolds within a context – be it a physical space, social framework, conceptual idea or a personal curiosity. When designing a product, I think about how it will interact with its surroundings and the people who engage with it or how will it support, structure, or subtly shift a space? Conversely, spatial concepts emerge from considerations of material, scale, or function. I don't see them as separate disciplines but as interwoven layers that continuously inform and enrich the other."*



© Max Schwarzmann

M&O: Modularity is a recurring feature in your work, why is this important?

M.L.S. : *"For me, it is both an aesthetical and conceptual decision. But, more than anything, it is a way of creating systems that can adapt and evolve. Contemporary life is rarely static: spaces change, routines shift, and so do the ways we use and relate to objects. A modular approach allows furniture to respond to such changes. Beyond this, it embeds longevity and openness into the design itself, creating something that's not fixed to a single purpose or moment. I try to develop objects that remain relevant, functionally and emotionally, because they allow space for change, reinterpretation and continued use over time."*



Thonis, Marie Luise Stein © Max Schwarzmann



E04, Marie Luise Stein © Marie Luise Stein



Liesl, Marie Luise Stein © Paul Sebesta Moormann

MORITZ WALTER

Graduating from the Muenster School of Design and completing a master's degree at KH Berlin Weissensee, Moritz Walter an industrial designer guided by an intrinsic curiosity for new materials and technologies. Based in Berlin, he explores the creation of clear and approachable objects for everyday use, centring on materiality, design processes and problem-solving solutions.

M&O: What drives your curiosity within design and what are your biggest creative influences?

Moritz Walter: *"I'm particularly interested in sustainable construction and material honesty, both important values in my process. I try to focus on products that feel accessible and intuitive. This becomes especially important in living and working environments, where products are part of daily routines and closely interact with people's habits. In such contexts, I think products should be approachable, unobtrusive and offering a certain calmness. These considerations shape both the technical and formal direction of a project, often resulting in a reduced and clear aesthetic."*



© DR

M&O: Does your creative process begin with an object in mind or do you focus on solving a dilemma?

M.W.: *"There's no fixed path, but I always enjoy working in a hands-on, iterative way. Sometimes the starting point is a clearly defined challenge as in my project HOTSPOT, where I explored the environmental impact of heating homes. The process began by understanding a problem and then looking for a meaningful, tangible response. Other times it begins with a specific material, a new technology, or manufacturing process. Then it's about exploring possibilities and seeing what object or system evolves from that. I think my lamp NORM, made from a single aluminium profile, is a good example of that approach."*



Nomad, Moritz Walter & Michelle Müller © DR



Hotspot, Moritz Walter © DR



Norm, Moritz Walter © DR

STUDIO Æ

Founded by Lisa Ertel and Anne-Sophie Oberkrome, the Berlin-based multidisciplinary design studio spans both furniture and object design from commission-based projects to global collaborations. Guided by the inherent characteristics of materials and everyday experiences, the studio explores narratives within the spatial and social contexts of which their projects evolve. Since 2022, the duo has also been teaching at HfbK Hamburg and are both guest professors at the HBK Saar.

M&O: What would you say is the unifying mission that fuels the passion behind each project?

Studio Æ: *“Our work is inspired by the unique spirit of a place, navigating the intersection of analogue and digital, culture and nature. Each project carries its own distinct influence and story but what ties them all together is a deep respect for the materials we work with. We seek to understand their specific qualities and push them to their full potential – ideally to a point where the material itself starts to shape the form. At the heart of it all is a constant dialogue between the two of us. An exchange that sharpens the concept and shapes the design – like a pebble that is smoothed over time.”*



© Peter Wolff

M&O: How do you find a balance between modern functionality and your own unique design language?

S.Æ.: *“We don’t see it as a matter of balancing the two as if they were opposing forces. For us, the concept doesn’t compete with function – it supports it. It puts the project into context, gives relevance to the function, and adds character to the object. We like to think of it as form following function, material and research. Our design language works more like a tool for translating and communicating topics we find meaningful into physical form. Sometimes that comes through playfully, sometimes with a subtle tactility, and sometimes more visual and bolder. But it always starts with curiosity!”*



Moving Stool Farm Edition, Studio OE © DR



Romer Glasses, Studio OE ©FAN Collective



OTO MC23, Studio OE © Florian Böhm (Studio AKFB)



TALENT CRAFT

BY ATELIERS D'ART DE FRANCE

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GABRIEL TARMASSI

Based in Bamberg, Gabriel Tarmassi hews his sculptural works from timber, exploring the intersection of art, design and craft. Through his practice, the designer explores the aesthetical qualities of the material, approaching each project with a spirit of experimentation while reimagining traditional skillsets through a contemporary lens. Tarmassi views wood as more than just a material to work with but rather a medium through which a dialogue emerges. His hands-on, artisanal process is shaped by the inherent features of the material, resulting in standalone, unique works of art.

M&O: Why did you decide on wood as the specific medium for your practice?

Gabriel Tarmassi: *"I grew up in a rural area of southern Germany and worked with it a lot as a child, carving spoons, making bows and arrows and building shelters in the woods. This led to a fascination with wood and how to work with it as a living material. You must work according to its own nature and pace as it's like being in a dialogue with the wood. During my apprenticeship I noticed a strong inclination to develop a more artistic approach based on the woodworking skills I was learning. It was not that I had my visual design language first, but the other way round – sometimes I feel that wood chose me."*



© Katharina Meixner

M&O: How does the material guide the final form of the piece you make?

G.T.: *"While my pieces are inspired by the formations we find in nature, the material itself is already telling a story. It's only through the act of making that I reveal the underlying layers of growth, and the specific expression of grain is something I try to incorporate. For works that feature dynamic movement, I use fine-grained woods like maple or cherry as they give me freedom in the design process. I also create sculptural pieces from green wood, often oak, that cracks and warps during the making process. These have an archaic expression that stands in contrast to the flowing language of my wall sculptures."*



The Shapeless Shape, Gabriel Tarmassi © DR



Duality, Gabriel Tarmassi © DR





Bowls, Gabriel Tarmassi © DR



Cabinet for a dreamer, Gabriel Tarmassi © DR

ABOUT MAISON&OBJET



© Anne-Emmanuelle Thion

Maison&Objet (SAFI, a subsidiary of Ateliers d'Art de France and RX France) has been a leader in the international decor, design, and lifestyle community since 1994.

Its trademark? Its ability to foster productive international meetings and enhance the visibility of the brands that exhibit at its trade shows and on its digital platform, as well as its singular aptitude for highlighting the trends that will set the hearts of the interior design community racing.

Maison&Objet's mission is to reveal talent, offer opportunities for discussion and inspiration both online and offline, and facilitate business development. With two annual exhibitions and Paris Design Week in September, Maison&Objet serves as an indispensable barometer for the entire sector. Online since 2016, MOM (Maison&Objet and More) allows buyers and brands to continue their exchanges, launch new collections, and make contacts beyond physical meetings. Weekly launches of new products that captivate the interior design community provide an ongoing boost to the industry.



© Anne-Emmanuelle Thion

In 2023, Maison&Objet rolled out new digital services, and MOM also became a marketplace. On social networks, discoveries are made on a daily basis by a community of almost two million professionals active on Facebook, Instagram (+1M followers), Twitter/X, LinkedIn, Xing, WeChat and TikTok. Maison&Objet is a catalyst that positions Paris as a major hub for international creative talent.

Maison&Objet is a catalyst for positioning Paris as one of the leading hubs of attraction for international creatives.

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