

Roomers

When it's not a mere closet or a humiliating capsule, the home claims to represent a clearing. It likes to think of itself as an island, an interlude, and a haven of serenity that shelters from the orgy of urban flux and the mysterious perils of life in the country. The objects brought together here under the term *Roomers* undo this boring argument for tranquility: although they are made for the interior of a residence, they openly speak a different language from the pacified one that the home would like to reflect.

Messengers of a new domestic plate tectonics, these *Roomers* are not steady lodgers. We can immediately read them as being inhabited or deranged: their lexis is one of a mobility that rubs shoulders with precarious balance and disorder and of possible holes in reality. To a certain extent, the *Roomers* might be something of a menace. Chaos is never far from triumphing when it gets a hold of a clock (*24h*), catastrophically desynchronizing orderly space as only a violent earthquake can. Resembling seating or side tables, extrusions of floorboards (*Drifters*) point to a perilous upheaval of the floor and holes punched through it. Chaos is already on the table (*Negotable*), reminding us of the disastrous anarchic deposit to which all horizontal surfaces in a house are susceptible. The table is the first in line for uncontrolled strata of diverse information and, when a computer keyboard finds itself next to a cup or plate, it is also the favored arena for conflict between eating and working: the jumble is here contained by a single sliding partition, an erected placemat. Elsewhere, flames devour and reveal the skeleton of a molding (*Burning Desire*), an outdated decorative element cast in bisque and whose blackened tip conjures up the smell of a fire. Loss of balance (*Anywhere*) is suggested by a variable, formal, and stylistic asymmetry of different light fixtures attached to a single track. Or an animal is invited to claw at a fine inlay of materials and colors (*Nowhere*) of a fragment from a seascape. To block out the sound of this growing disorder, a helmet offers illusory protection (*Pentaphone*), all the while stirring up doubts concerning our capacity to cope with the disarray.

Counter to this interpretation of the *Roomers*, an inverse position is also legitimate: while everything elicits a dynamic likely to animate the domain of furniture, transforming it into a playground designed for movement, the very meaning that can be assigned to them is subject to this same mobile logic. Accordingly, *Burning Desire* turns out to be a perfume container, the trick bottom drawer of an olfactory experience created by Stadler, which itself is an episodic fragrance: it emerges as an enchantment interrupting the catastrophe of a fire, a complex smell that now intertwines calcination (the thought of burning incense is certainly not a stranger to this miraculous sentiment). On the face of the clock (*24h*), harmony is ideal again, twice a day, when the reality reproduced by the image is reinstated: at noon and at midnight, gracious curves rediscover their ideal fluidity. The translations of the table's vertical partition (*Negotable*) are those of chaos defeated, of play between territories made possible, or of a concord between contradictory activities finally made conceivable. *Anywhere* is the instrument of freedom to dispose sources of light: it makes it possible to reach all areas of darkness without cluttering floor space; on a single line, it encourages dialogue between differing vocabularies that were thought irreconcilable. The portions of raised floorboards match each other, relieve one from sitting or putting things on the floor, and discreetly reconstitute a new orderly layout

with its interlocking structure—pure peace of mind! If the feline takes it out on *Nowhere*, the couch will be spared. The polyhedral bell jar of silence (*Pentaphone*) also says reassuring words by convening a constructive serene logic of mathematical order.

The *Roomers* are composed of seven accounts of possible slips, multiple tracings of something invisible—rumors of the Other. What's more, they lead one to presume that Robert Stadler, himself, is *Another*. More precisely, they lead one think that Stadler has developed an outstanding practice of split personalities. The forms that his work can take, those that we see here, bring to mind, for example, a short text by the writer Saint-John Perse: "One day in Malaysia, somebody cited a belief of an aboriginal tribe of Borneo: every night, man frees his *double* who, in the form of a very honorable monkey, will perpetrate all night long the most extreme and beautiful enterprises that the poor diurnal slave cannot access; by the light of day, however, it is strictly forbidden to mention the slightest connection between the two beings." I will only whisper my feeling that the very honorable monkey was at work here. But Stadler will say nothing of the sort; he is not allowed to.

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