

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Home with humanity



MODERN LIFESTYLES: Items from bangdesign's new range of furniture, entitled 'Pli'. The collection is characterised by a combination of wooden shells with brushed stainless steel leg frames.

BARRY Humphries once suggested that the reason for the popularity of Australian urban cafe culture was that modern apartments — especially their interior design and furniture — were so unwelcoming that residents wanted to spend as much time away from them as possible.

You can't help wondering if architects and designers sometimes forget the human dimension when creating apartments, furniture or domestic interiors. Is it a case, as Prince Charles once observed about contemporary architecture, of one person making an artistic statement and the rest of us being stuck with the results?

One Sydney firm has made it its business to integrate modern lifestyles into industrial design. bangdesign, established by former Canberrans Bryan Marshall and David Granger, has been operating for 16 years and has just released a new range of furniture under the name of "Pli", designed with both the public and the environment in mind.

Marshall and Granger met while studying industrial arts at Hawker College in the late

In the often cold and esoteric arena of modern design, a Sydney firm has based its business on products for the customer rather than the designer, writes **Philip O'Brien**

1970s. They then went on to complete degrees in industrial design at the University of Canberra, a course which has established a strong national reputation over the past 30 years.

"I was excited by the challenge of industrial design being able to bring disparate ingredients together in one object," Granger says. "It's not about an artistic expression — it's about developing something that has a creative strength to it and tuning that to an audience."

Marshall was drawn to industrial design for similar reasons. "I loved the fact that it's not material specific or manufacturing-

technique specific."

The company has a diverse portfolio, including furniture, graphics and exhibition work. They chose their business name to further pronounce the design process rather than ego — they didn't want a name such as Marshall, Granger & Associates. One of their friends had a budgerigar named "Bang", and the pair liked the name — it was easy to remember and could mean many things to different people.

The firm has several credos. One is an approach to problem solving in design — a process by which everything is questioned. Another is the concept of design "as a verb not a noun", emphasising the process of design, rather than the finished object.

While Marshall and Granger see industrial design as having broad applications, they knew early on that furniture was an ideal focus for their business.

"Our approach has always been more about 'them'; than 'us'," Marshall says.

"It's not about our aesthetic eye prevailing but about understanding people's lifestyles that are relevant for furniture."

Furniture comprises about a third of bangdesign's portfolio. Other areas include bathroom ware, including toilets and basins for Caroma

and tap ware for Dorf Clark Industries. They also designed the pew seating at the Central Synagogue in Sydney as well as medal boxes, and some packaging design together with lane and distance markers for the Sydney Olympics.

Now their new range of environmentally conscious Pli furniture has just been released, characterised by a combination of wooden shells with brushed stainless steel leg frames. All designs in the range make use of plywood, hence the name Pli.

"We steer clear of products that don't have a lasting value," Granger says. "Our designs are well made and comfortable. We like to find an emotive connection with a product and an opportunity to deliver more than just function."

Marshall says, "Fashion certainly has a place in design, but bangdesign tries to inject a sense of longevity. But design has to be relevant to today. We seek to understand people's expectations, what they are looking for both consciously and sub-consciously and to ensure that the design solution is relevant to them."

■ bangdesign's 'Pli' range of furniture will be available in Canberra in February through INO Contract Furniture, 42 Mort Street, Braddon.

■ www.bangdesign.com.au

Baseball has rules. Meet the exceptions.

BAD NEWS Bears

the return of BAD SANTA the director of THE SCHOOL OF ROCK

BILLY BOB THORNTON
PARAMOUNT PRESENTS A MEDIA TALENT GROUP PRODUCTION IN ASSOCIATION WITH BETTER FILM PRODUCTIONS
A RICHARD LUNNATER AND BILLY BOB THORNTON "BAD NEWS BEARS" STARRING WILSON BOWEN AND MARISA GAY HARDEN
MUSIC BY EDUARDO GRESERANINI COSTUME DESIGNER RANDALL PRATER PRODUCTION DESIGNER PHILIP J. LEEPER EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS RICHARD LUNNATER
PRODUCED BY BILL LANCASTER WRITTEN BY BILL LANCASTER AND GLEN FICKAAR & JOHN REILLY DIRECTED BY RICHARD LUNNATER

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- R18+** RESTRICTED TO 18 YEARS AND OVER
- PG** PARENTAL GUIDANCE RECOMMENDED FOR PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS
- MA 15+** RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO PERSONS UNDER 15 YEARS
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| MANUKA | ME, YOU AND EVERYONE WE KNOW (R18+) TUE 10.50, 3.00, 4.50, 6.40, 8.30pm |
| HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE (M) NO FREE TICKETS TUE 10.30, 1.40, 6.30, 9.30pm | THE CONSTANT GARDENER (M) TUE 10.20, 12.50, 3.30, 6.20, 8.50pm |
| KING KONG (18) NO FREE TICKETS | PRIDE AND PREJUDICE (G) TUE 10.15, 12.45, 3.15, 6.30pm |
| STARTS WED 10.00, 1.40, 5.20, 9.00pm | SHOPGIRL (M) TUE 10.45, 3.00, 7.10, 9.15pm |
| KISS KISS BANG BANG (MA15+) TUE 10.30, 12.40, 2.45, 4.50, 7.00, 9.10pm | BEE SEASON (M) TUE 12.50, 5.00pm |
| LITTLE FISH (MA15+) TUE 12.40, 9.00pm | |

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| CIVIC | KING KONG (18) NO FREE TICKETS STARTS WED 10.00, 1.40, 5.20, 9.00pm |
| HARRY POTTER AND THE GOBLET OF FIRE (M) NO FREE TICKETS TUE 10.30, 1.40, 6.00, 9.10pm | WOLF CREEK (R18+) TUE 1.15, 3.20, 5.20, 7.20, 9.20pm |
| BABES IN ARMS - CHILDREN UNDER 5 FREE NECESSARY ONLY 10.30pm | THE BROTHERS GRIMM (M) TUE 10.45, 1.00, 6.30pm |
| SAW 2 (MA15+) TUE 11.00, 3.30, 8.50pm | |

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Picks

- Canberra Museum and Gallery has *Digital Canberra*, by Michael Ashcroft, Peter Fitzpatrick, Scott Morrison, Paul Mosig and Rachel Peachey, in Gallery 5 until January 15.
- *Blood Ties*, by Helen Geier and Kanchan Chander, is in the Window Gallery until February 26. The gallery is in London Circuit, Civic.
- Canberra Quilters are showing quilts. The display is open tomorrow, 9.30am-8pm, Thursday and Friday, 9.30am-5.30pm, at Erindale Library, McBryde Crescent, Wanniaassa.
- The Alliance Francaise at 66 McCaughey Street, Turner, has *Desert Space* by research students of the College of Fine Arts from the University of NSW, until December 20.

Inland at Collector

COLLECTOR Gallery has a video and paper art show, *Inland Earth*, by Anne Bourke, running until January 31. The gallery's main aim is to provide works which celebrate and enhance our understanding of the natural environment. The gallery is at 22 Church Street, Collector, and is open Saturday and Sunday, 10am to 4.30pm, or by appointment by phoning 0403 568 112.

Spirit of Salvos

THE NEW Salvos' *Spirit of Christmas CD* features songs from John Farnham (*One Little Christmas Tree*), Vika and Linda Bull (*Away In A Manger*), Human Nature (*Frosty The Snowman*), Adam Harvey (*Jingle Bell Rock*), Anthony Callea (*The Christmas Song*), Marcia Hines (*Reach Out and Touch*) and more. It's the 12th such CD and is available only at Myer stores.

Charlotte's musical

PHOENIX Players' *Charlotte's Web* — the Musical is in rehearsal for a season at Theatre 3 from January 13 to 28. For more details: www.phoenix.contact.com.au