

prostoria

Revisiting Richter

From Archive to Life

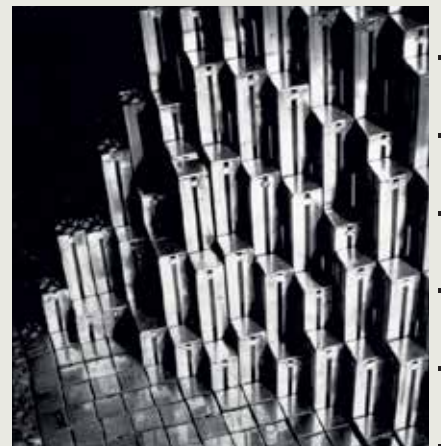
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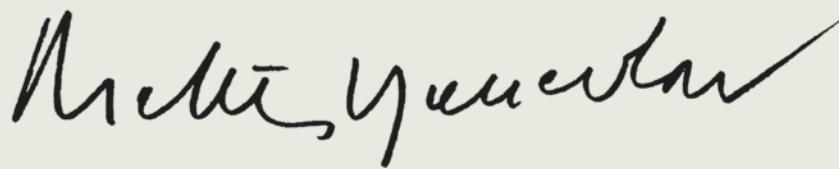
Revisiting Richter is Prostoria's way to connect its own values with the work of Vjenceslav Richter (1917–2002) — a key figure of modernism whose thinking remains strikingly relevant today.

Rooted in a shared understanding of design as structure, not decoration, the project links concept, material and use. Through archival research, reconstruction and development, Prostoria translates Richter's unrealised designs into objects shaped for today's standards of comfort, durability and everyday life.

Conceived as a long-term project, *Revisiting Richter* unfolds as an evolving system rather than a closed collection. As in Richter's own thinking, objects are not isolated, but part of larger structures — and part of futures still in formation.







Vjenceslav Richter was an architect, artist, designer and theorist whose work moved fluidly across disciplines, guided by a unified approach. As a founding member of the EXAT 51 group, he advocated the synthesis of art, architecture and design, rejecting their separation in favour of a coherent system shaping modern life.

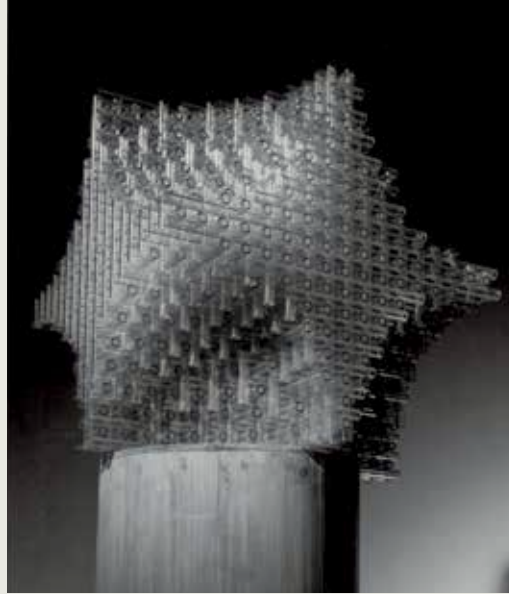
His work ranged from exhibition pavilions and interiors to urban concepts and theoretical research, including his long-term exploration of Synthurbanism. Internationally recognised through projects such as Expo 1958 in Brussels and the Triennale di Milano, as well as exhibitions in institutions including the Guggenheim Museum in New York, Richter positioned his work within a global modernist discourse.

Working decades before the emergence of digital design, Richter approached form as a system of rules rather than a fixed composition. His projects operated almost algorithmically, capable of generating architecture, objects and spatial configurations from a shared logic. For Richter, synthesis meant precisely this - architecture, art and design operating as one system.

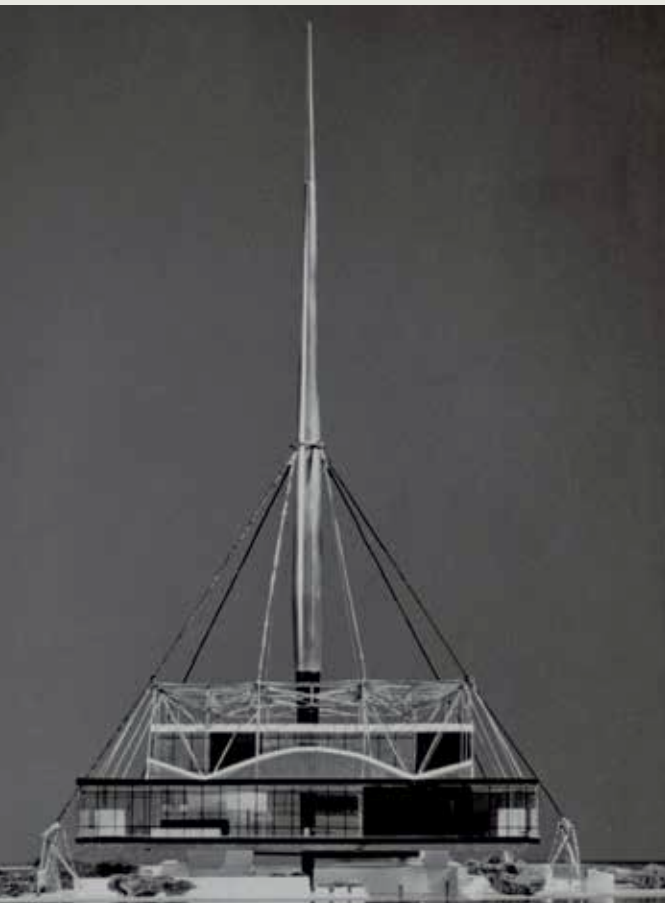
Rather than producing isolated objects, he developed structures - systems of relationships between space, form and use. In this sense, design was not decorative, but infrastructural: a means of organising everyday life.



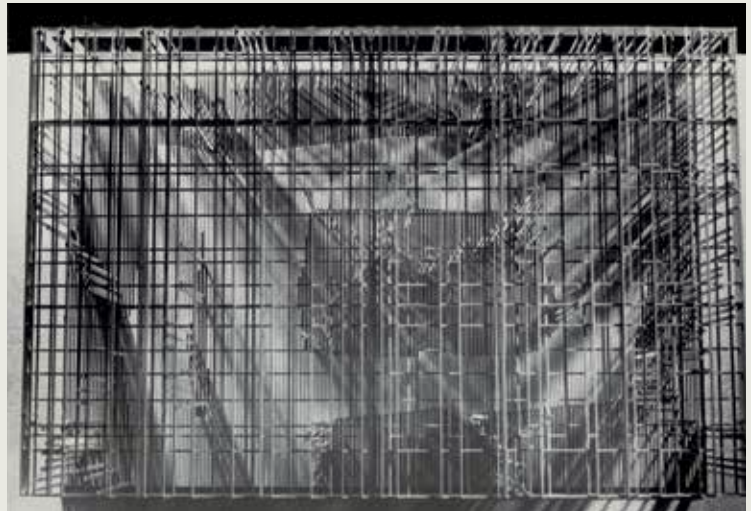
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04

His work was grounded in the idea that design connects research and everyday life. He actively contributed to institutions linking art, industry and society, positioning design as an applied and transformative discipline.

Avant-Gardist

Vjenceslav Richter's early work emerged from the post-war avant-garde, promoting experimental and socially engaged art. Through EXAT 51 and later initiatives, he challenged the separation between disciplines and advocated a synthesis of art, architecture and design.

Builder of Systems

His work was grounded in the idea that design connects research and everyday life. He actively contributed to institutions linking art, industry and society, positioning design as an applied and transformative discipline.

Visionary

Richter's projects were oriented toward the future. Many of them were conceived as research proposals – structured, rational, yet open – anticipating conditions that had not yet emerged.

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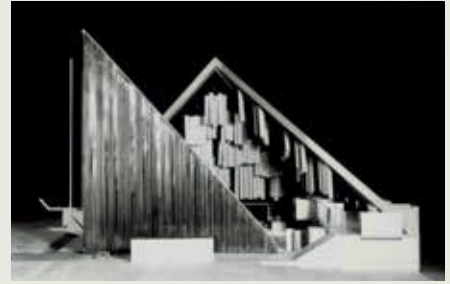


Pioneer of Interactivity

He understood design as an open system shaped by human participation. Objects and spaces were conceived as frameworks that gain meaning through use.

Between East and West

Working within a non-aligned cultural context, Richter connected global ideas across political and ideological boundaries, positioning his work within an international discourse.



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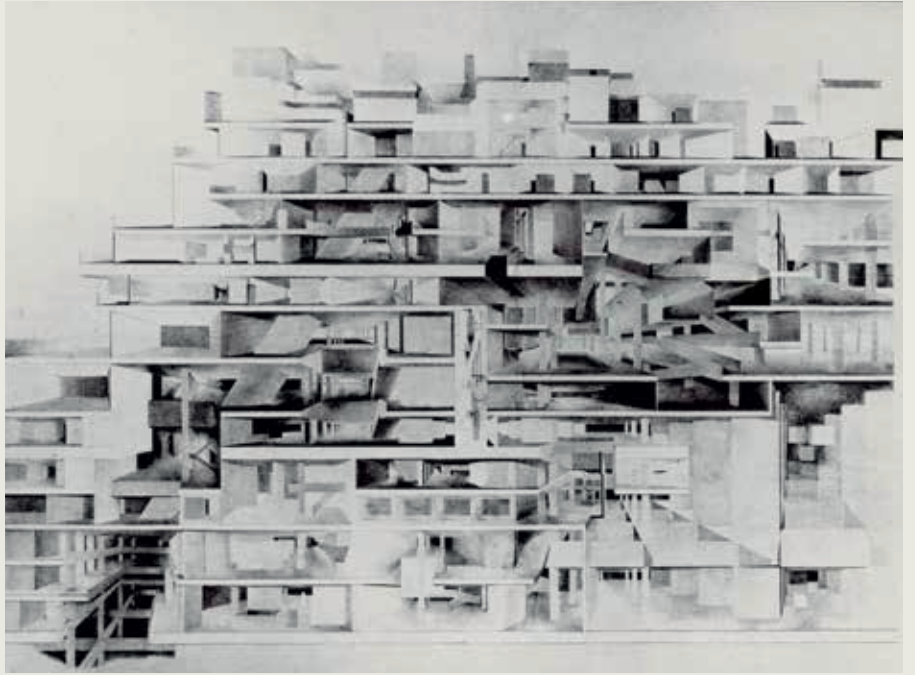
06 Yugoslav Pavilion at the Milan Triennale, 1964
07 Model of the Yugoslav Pavilion for

the Expo 1967, Montreal, competition project
08 Decomposed Sphere II, sculpture, 1967

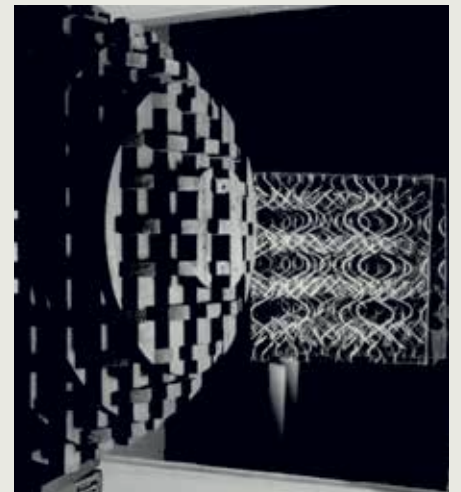
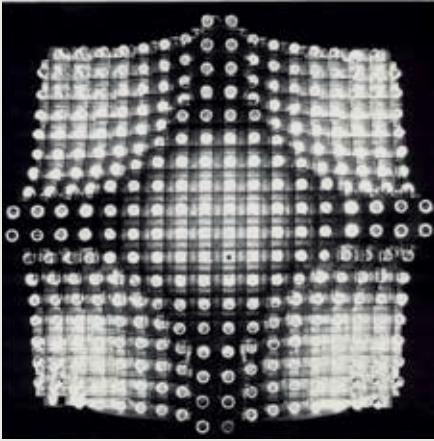
09 Synturbanism, urbanistic project, section, 1964 – onwards
10 Asymmetrical Centra, sculpture, 1963

11 Reliefmeter 1, sculpture, 1963
12 Yugoslav Pavillon at the Expo 58, Brussels, interior, 1958

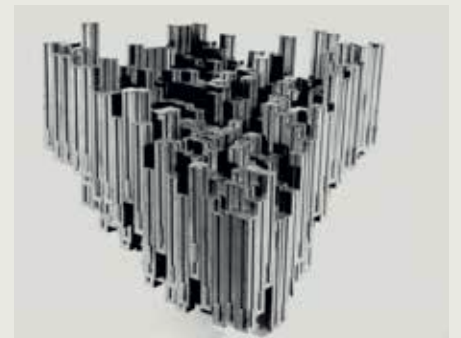
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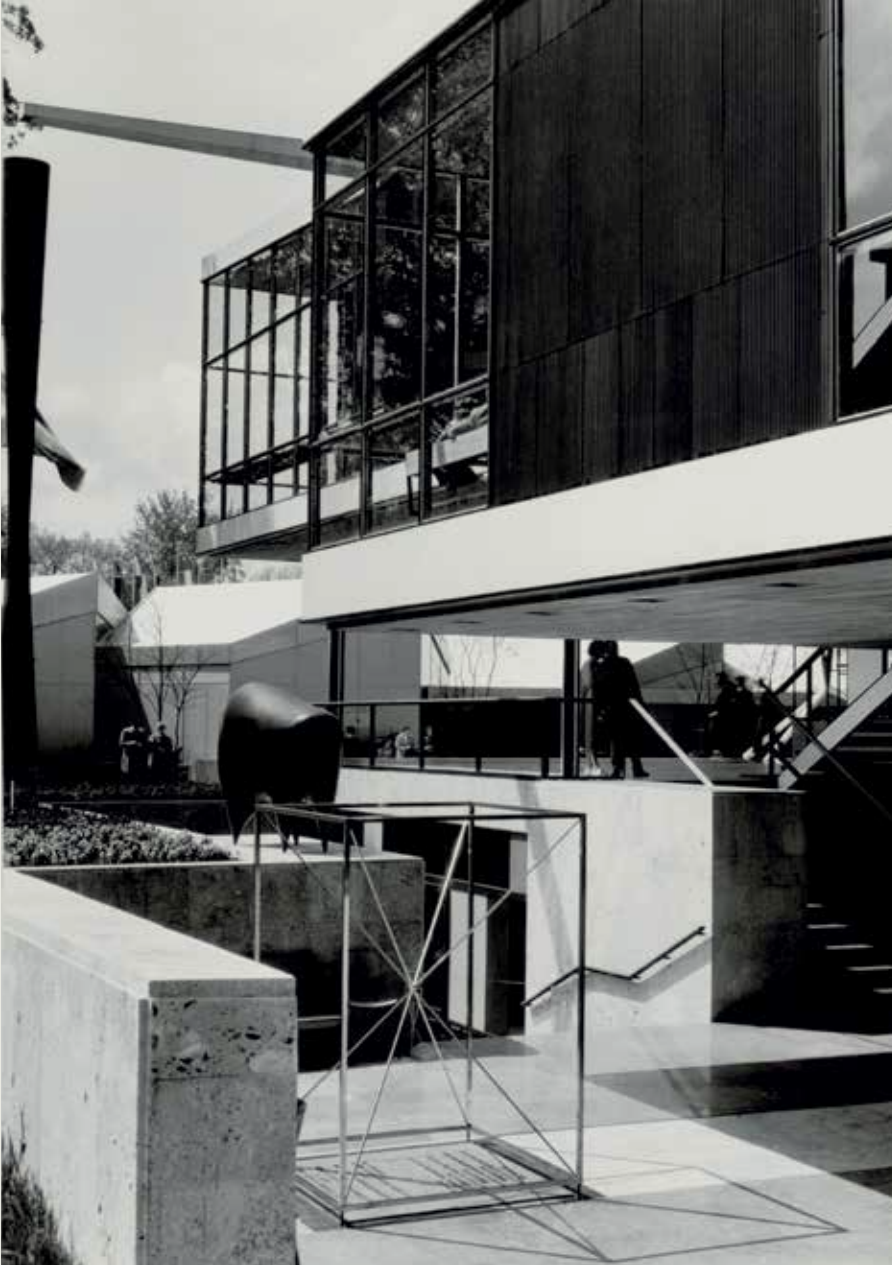
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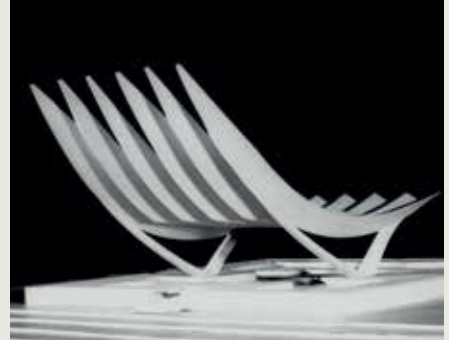
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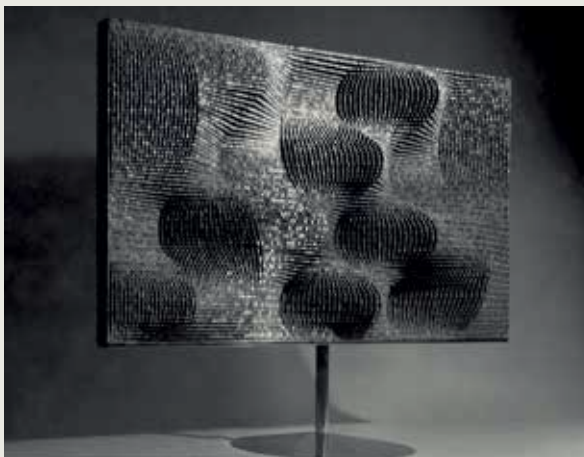


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"Industrial design has the role of an indispensable connective tissue through which, alongside architecture and urbanism, the viability of an entire range of artistic directions is tested!"

Vjenceslav Richter, *Some Observations on the Synthesis of the Visual Arts*, *Kulturni život* 9-10, 1963

Mediator of Power

Richter's position within the socio-political context of Yugoslavia enabled him to work on projects of high representational significance, including Tito's villa in Zagreb and the Museums of the Revolution in Zagreb and Belgrade. Yet he avoided monumentality and direct symbolism. Instead of affirming power, he translated it into systems, framing society as an open, rational, and evolving structure rather than a fixed image of authority.

Internationalist

While rooted in a specific socio-political context, Richter's practice operated across borders, connecting local conditions with international discourse. From early exhibitions to award-winning pavilions at Expo 1958 in Brussels and the Milan Triennale, his work engaged a global audience. Alongside architecture, he exhibited as an artist internationally, presenting systemic sculptures and Sinturbanism, while his collaboration with industry at LACMA reflected his view of technology as part of a broader social system.

17



13 Yugoslav Pavillion at the Expo 58, Brussels, 1958
14 Memorial in Montevideo, unrealised project, 1959

15 Vjenceslav Richter with the installation Black Hole, Trigon 75, Graz, 1975
16 Closed Sinusoids, sculpture, 1968

17 Le Corbusier visits the Yugoslav Pavillion at the International Labour Exhibition, Turin, 1961

Our reference
to modernism
was never formal —
it was structural.

— PROSTORIA

na — Ing. arh. B. Ber-



From Archive to Production

Richter+ brought together Numen/ForUse, Neisako and Grupa studios who collaboratively translated Vjenceslav Richter's archival designs into contemporary products. Through research and development with Prostoria's in-house team, they turned unrealised concepts into functional pieces that retain Richter's experimental spirit while meeting today's standards of comfort and production.

The process unfolded as a precise, research-led reconstruction. Rather than repeating historical forms, each piece was developed by decoding Richter's underlying systems - proportion, geometry and structural intent - and carrying them forward into a contemporary context.

Working with incomplete archival material, the designers moved fluidly between roles of analyst and maker. Iterative prototyping and testing allowed each object to gradually stabilise, resolving technical and ergonomic demands while staying anchored in the original conceptual framework.



“For us, modernism has always been present through values — in how we design, how we work, and how we approach comfort.”

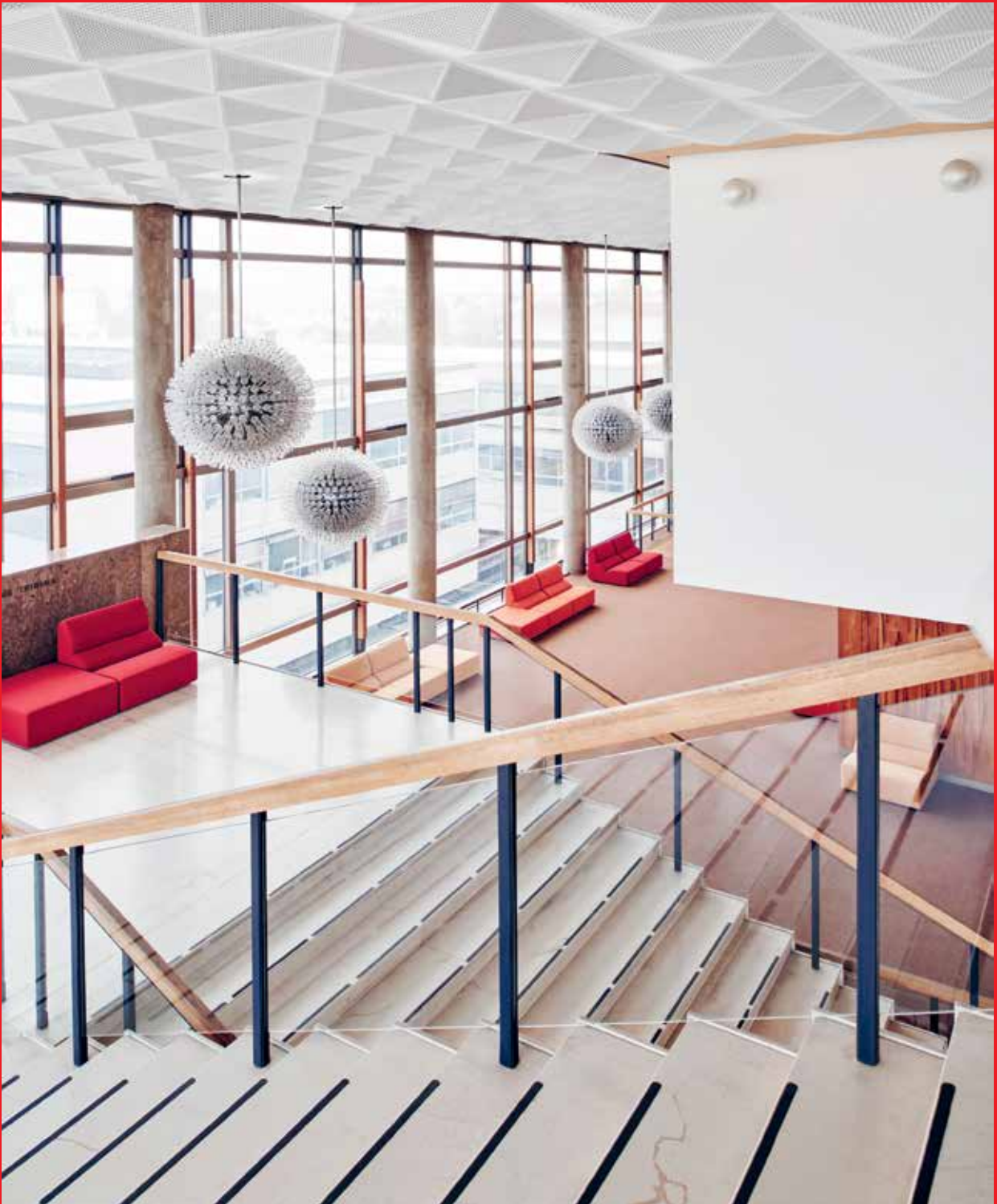
— PROSTORIA



Shared Values

Layout sofa featured in the Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall, a key modernist architectural landmark in Zagreb.

Oblique easy chair in editorial Revisiting Architecture, at Vatroslav Lisinski Concert Hall, Zagreb.



The connection between Prostoria and Vjenceslav Richter is grounded in a shared understanding of modernism. For Prostoria, modernism is not an aesthetic reference, but a set of working principles: clarity of construction, honesty of materials and a focus on everyday life. Design is approached as a process that connects thinking and making, concept and production.

This approach resonates directly with Richter's work, where form emerges from structure and objects are conceived in relation to their use and context. In this alignment, the project becomes more than reinterpretation - it becomes a continuation of a shared logic.



VR52

VR58

VR61

VR53

VR61

VR61

VR58

The Collection

The Richter Collection includes a range of seating, tables and work typologies, each derived from a specific fragment of Richter's thinking. Rather than being conceived as isolated products, these pieces form a system – a set of interrelated objects that reflect the broader logic of his work. The collection establishes the foundation of an evolving body of work that will continue to expand over time.

**VR51**

VR51 Chair
VR51 Desk

VR52

VR52 Easychair

VR53

VR53 Easychair
VR53 Easychair with armrests
VR53 Pouf

VR58

VR58 Chair
VR58 Table
VR58 Easychair
VR 58 Low table

VR61

VR61 Chair
VR61 Table
VR61 Easychair
VR61 Low table
VR61 Lounge chair

VR51

VR58

VR61

It is not a return to history, but an activation of it — continuing a body of work that was never fully realised and bringing it into contemporary production.



The Richter Collection

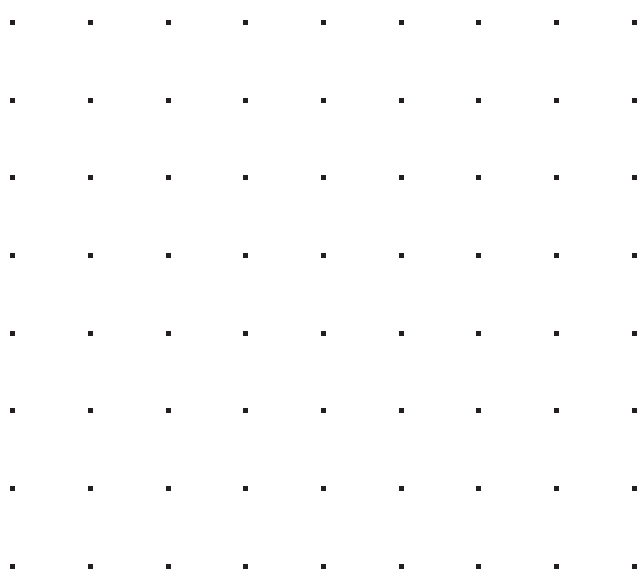




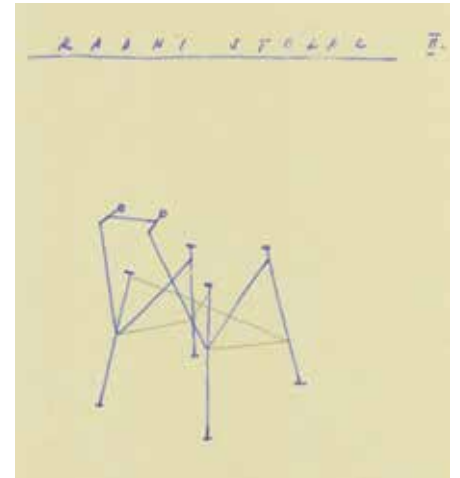
VR51 revisits a compact task chair originally conceived by Vjenceslav Richter as part of a rational workspace system. Defined by an ultra-light metal frame and a carefully balanced composition of supports, the chair reflects a clear logic of structural economy. The organic forms of the seat and backrest contrast with the precise geometry of the metal frame. Mounted on flexible supports, the backrest allows a subtle elastic movement that enhances comfort within the minimal construction.

Richter's original design reflected the austere conditions of its time. Pro-toria's contemporary interpretation refines proportions, ergonomics and technical details while preserving the clarity and restraint of the original concept. VR51 becomes a lightweight and efficient task chair, translating modernist rationality into a form suited for contemporary work environments.

VR51







Historical Context
Art Pavilion, Zagreb, 1951

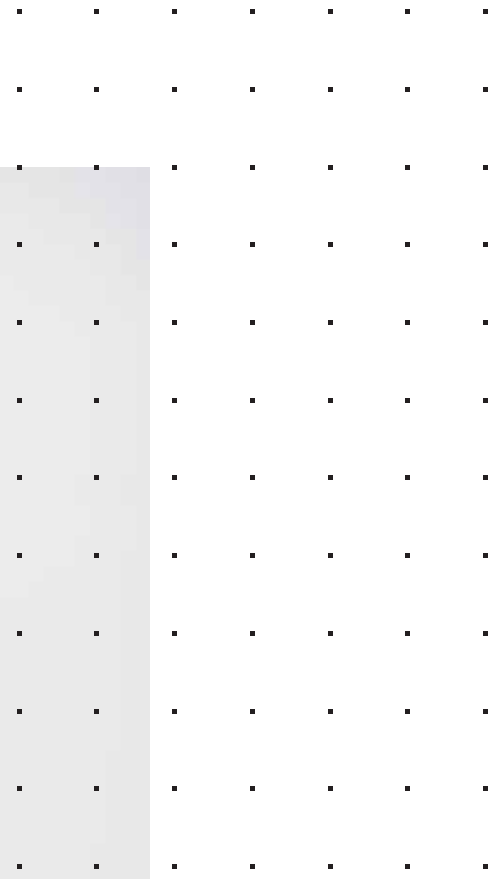
The chair is the earliest known example of Richter's product design. It was originally designed for the ideologically and formally radical project of transforming the Art Pavilion in Zagreb into the Museum of the Revolution. Within the monumental neo-classical rotunda, Richter inserts a dramatic sequence of lightweight stairs and platforms that completely redefines the character and functioning of the space. In place of a static central hall, he creates an open circulation and exhibition system. As part of the project, he also designs typologically simple chairs whose metal structure and oval surfaces reflect the language of the neo-avant-garde. This is also a rare example of product design for which Richter's sketches have been preserved, while several surviving pieces are held in the Croatian School Museum in Zagreb.













VR52 is defined by a minimal tubular steel frame and ergonomically shaped plywood surfaces, forming a clear and expressive composition. Supported at discrete points, the seat and backrest introduce a subtle elasticity, enhancing comfort while maintaining structural precision.

Developed through scanning and iterative refinement, the frame was strengthened and proportions carefully adjusted, while preserving the original logic. Upholstered versions were added without altering the clarity of the silhouette. VR52 translates Richter's experimental chair into a refined contemporary piece, balancing lightness, flexibility, and control.

VR52







Historical Context

EXAT 51 Chair, Zagreb, 1952

This chair was the only three-dimensional object presented at the first and only exhibition of the EXAT 51 group (Experimental Atelier), held in Zagreb in 1952. Formed by artists and architects including Vjenceslav Richter, the group advocated the synthesis of art and architecture and the removal of boundaries between disciplines. The chair translated these ideas into a functional object, extending the language of abstract art into space and use. It later appeared in the interior of the

Restaurant of the Adriatic Hotel in Umag (1953), designed by architect Neda Šilović, though it remains unclear whether it was originally conceived for the exhibition, the project, or both. Today, the chair is considered one of the key works of Croatian modernist design and is part of the collection of the Museum of Arts and Crafts in Zagreb.











VR53 is based on archival photographs of Vjenceslav Richter's interiors from the early 1950s, where no physical prototype survives. Reconstructed through the analysis of proportion and posture, it is defined by a minimal wooden base with a rotated T-shaped geometry supporting soft upholstered volumes. The original substructure was removed to achieve a more reduced composition, while contemporary technologies refined comfort and precision. The typology was extended into an armchair and footstool, each derived from the same structural logic. VR53 translates Richter's design principles into a clear and lightweight system, where minimal construction meets soft, inhabitable form.

VR53





Historical Context
Pavilion Restaurant, Hotel Adriatic,
Umag, Croatia, 1953

In the early 1950s, as mass tourism was only beginning to emerge, Yugoslavia gradually opened to international visitors. In Umag, architect Nada Šilović designed the pavilion restaurant of Hotel Adriatic, organised around an architectural promenade defined by a ramp leading to a roof terrace.

While the exact nature of the collaboration remains unclear, Vjenceslav Richter was responsible for the interior. The space featured a chair previously shown at the EXAT-51 exhibition in Zagreb in 1953, suggesting that the prototype may have been developed specifically for this project. He also introduced a low armchair of reduced, almost archetypal form.

The pavilion was later reconstructed and eventually demolished, and none of the armchairs are known to have survived.













VR58 revisits an easy chair originally designed by Vjenceslav Richter for Expo 58 in Brussels. Defined by a precise tubular frame and characteristic X-shaped base, the chair expresses a clear logic of structure and proportion. With no surviving technical drawings, Prostoria reconstructed the design through analysis of archival photographs, extracting axes and relationships from the image. During development, key elements were refined: tube diameters increased for stability, wooden components adjusted, and the seating angle improved for comfort. VR58 translates Richter's construction into a balanced and durable contemporary piece.

VR58





Historical Context Expo 58, Brussels Pavilion, 1958

Richter's most celebrated architectural project is the Yugoslav Pavilion at Expo 58 in Brussels. He won the competition with a radical proposal for a building with "foundations in the air", suspended from a central mast. Although this structural concept was abandoned during the development of the project, the pavilion retained other experimental ideas that defined Richter's work.

Unlike many national pavilions that primarily showcased technological achievements, the Yugoslav Pavilion presented the concept of self-management socialism. The building was conceived as a fluid sequence of terraces that extended from the surrounding landscape directly into the interior. Without doors or rigid boundaries, the pavilion communicated openness and adaptability.

The architecture was organised through a disciplined three-dimensional modular grid, within which all elements found their position. Alongside the main pavilion, Richter also designed a smaller restaurant pavilion. For this space he created chairs with a distinctive X-shaped base, a structural motif he explored across several product design experiments.

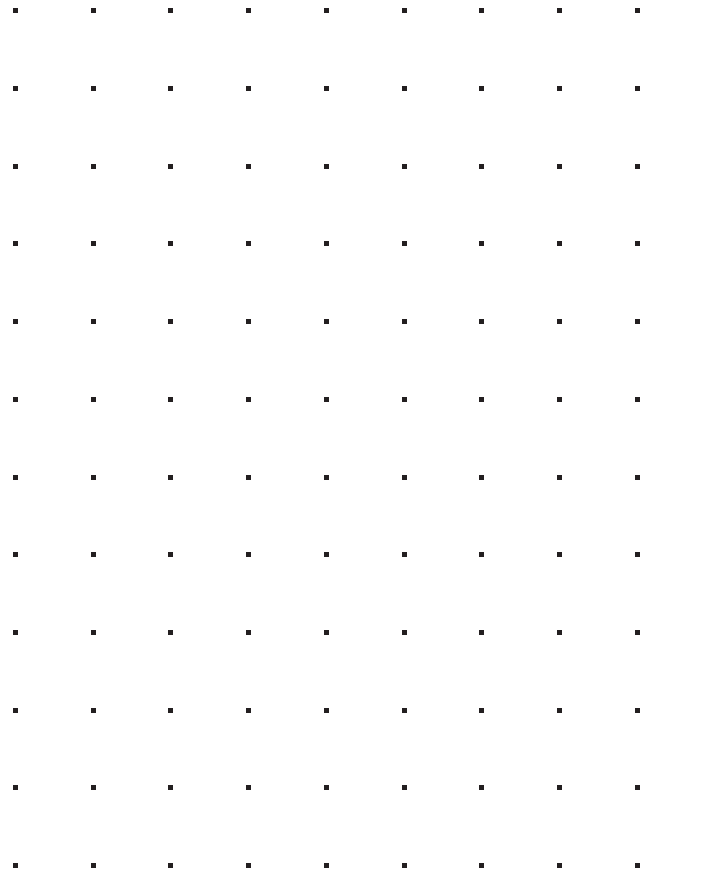
The pavilion received wide international acclaim and was awarded the gold medal at Expo 58.











VR61

REVISITING RICHTER



VR61 revisits a chair originally conceived by Vjenceslav Richter for Italia '61 in Turin. Defined by mirrored symmetry and a sculptural plywood shell rising from a central base, it reflects a precise geometric logic. While the original proportions aligned with a dining typology, Proctoria developed two interpretations, including a version adapted for relaxed seating. In this evolution, proportions and inclination were carefully adjusted to enhance comfort while preserving structural clarity. A re-engineered construction ensures stability and durability. VR61 becomes a refined continuation of Richter's idea, adapted to contemporary use.

VR61







Historical Context

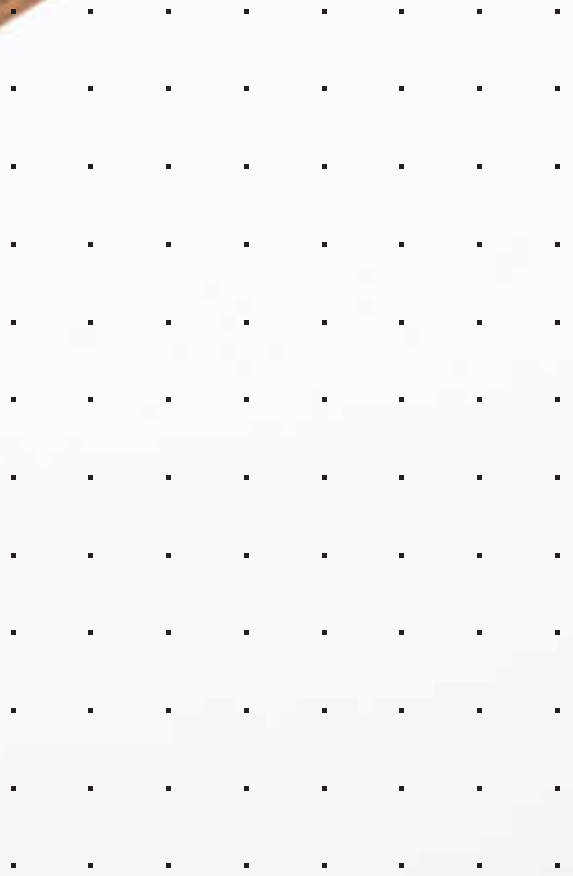
International Labour Exhibition, Turin, 1961

The International Labour Exhibition in Turin in 1961 took place in a monumental hall designed by Pier Luigi Nervi. Within this environment defined by a regular grid of massive columns, Richter introduced a contrasting spatial strategy. He designed a lightweight pavilion without right angles, composed of circular plan forms divided into triangular segments. The pavilion explored a non-hierarchical spatial system and a fluid sequence of spaces within a clearly defined geometric structure.

Inside the pavilion Richter designed an interactive installation composed of movable concentric circles. Through interaction with the device, visitors learned about the key concept of Yugoslav self-management socialism.

For the pavilion Richter designed bent-plywood chairs whose forms continued the spatial logic of the pavilion itself. Several examples survive today, some of which remain in use in the Technical Museum in Zagreb.









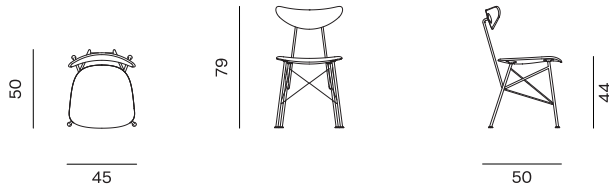




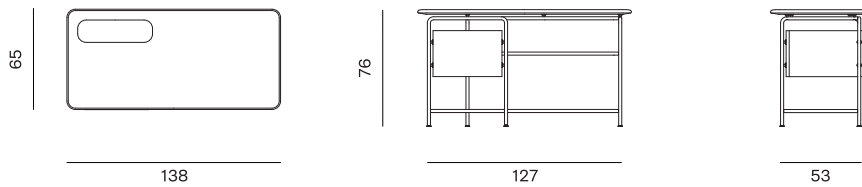


VR51

VR51 CHAIR
45 × 50 × 79 cm

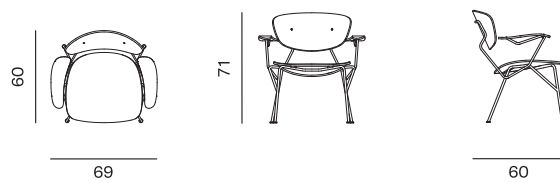


VR51 DESK
138 × 65 × 76 cm



VR52

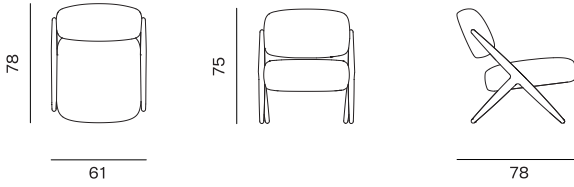
VR52 EASYCHAIR
69 × 60 × 71 cm



VR53

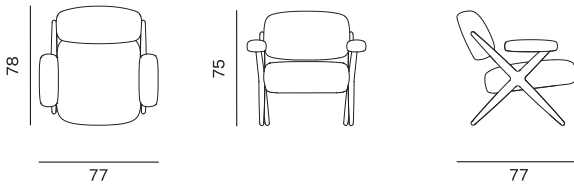
VR53 EASYCHAIR

61 × 78 × 75 cm



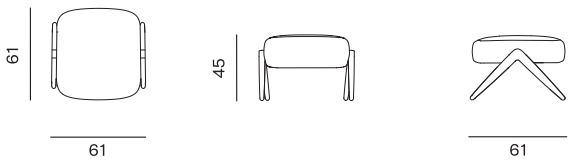
VR53 EASYCHAIR WITH ARMRESTS

77 × 78 × 75 cm



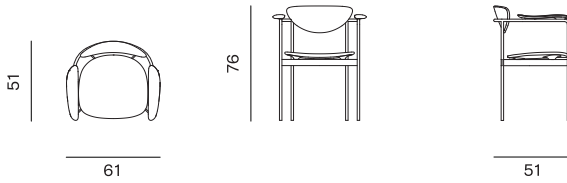
VR53 POUF

61 × 61 × 45 cm

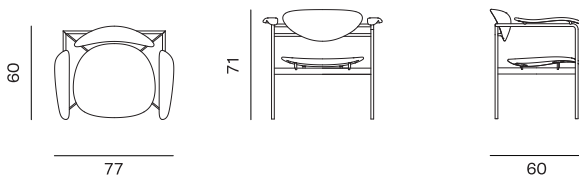


VR58

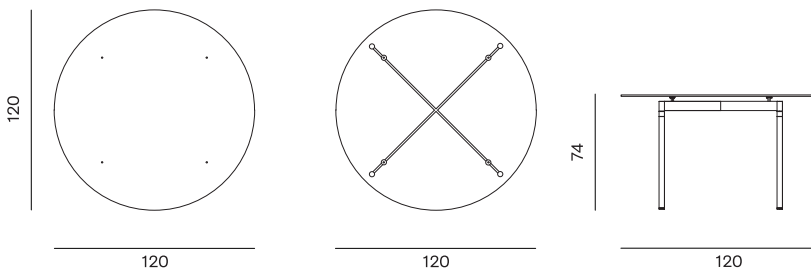
VR58 CHAIR
61 × 51 × 76 cm



VR58 EASYCHAIR
77 × 60 × 71 cm

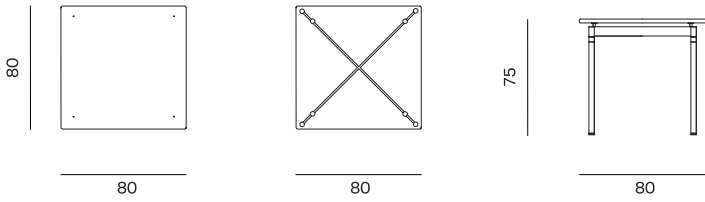


VR58 TABLE
glass top
Ø 120 × 74 cm

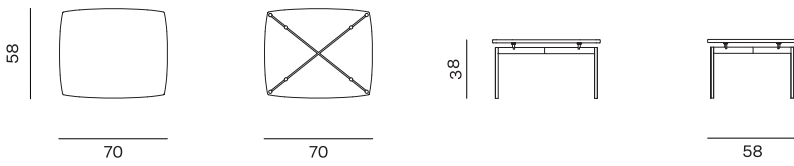


VR58

VR58 TABLE
 glass top
 80 x 80 x 75 cm

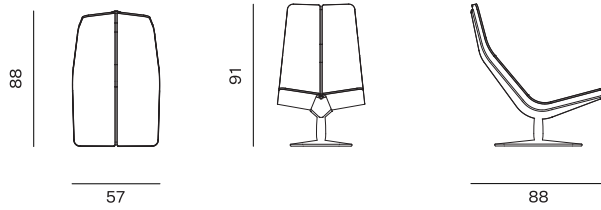


VR58 LOW TABLE
 stone/wooden/glass top
 70 x 58 x 38/39 cm

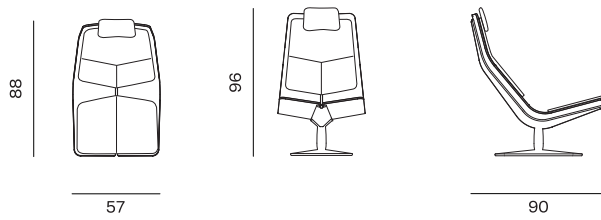


VR61

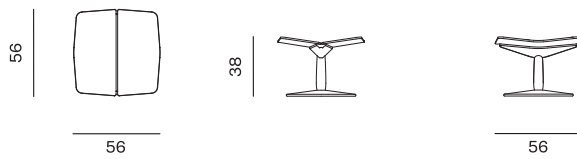
VR61 LOUNGE CHAIR WITH HIGH BACK 57 × 88 × 91 cm



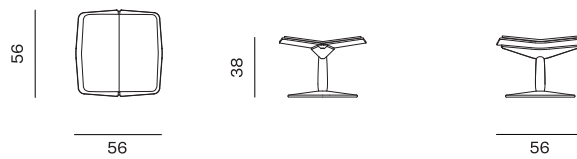
VR61 LOUNGE CHAIR CUSHION 57 × 88 × 96 cm



VR61 POUF 56 × 56 × 38 cm

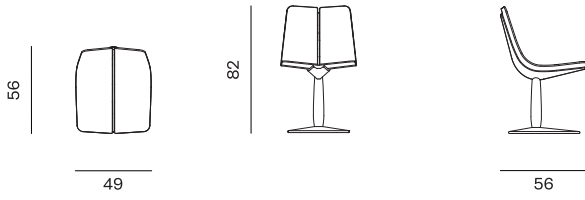


VR61 POUF CUSHION 56 × 56 × 38 cm

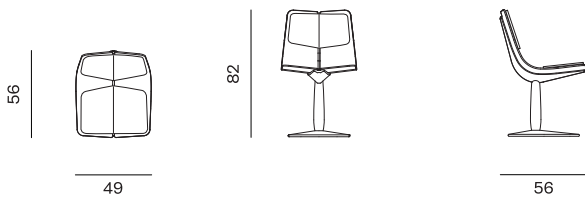


VR61

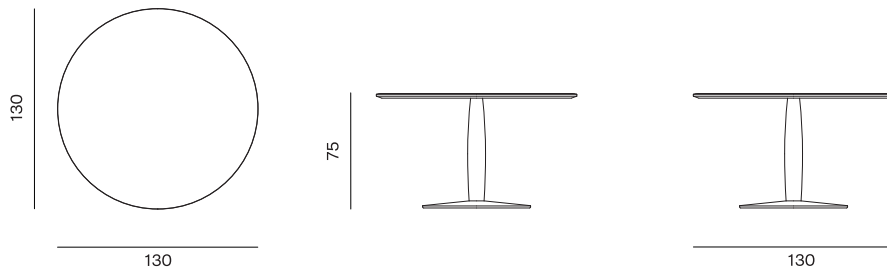
VR61 CHAIR
49 × 56 × 82 cm



VR61 CHAIR CUSHION
49 × 56 × 82 cm

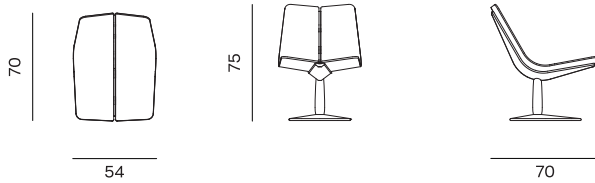


VR61 TABLE
Ø 130 × 75 cm

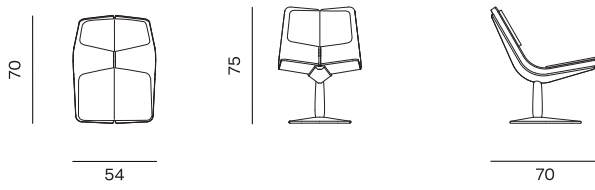


VR61

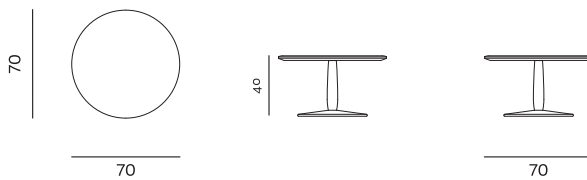
VR61 EASYCHAIR
54 x 70 x 75 cm



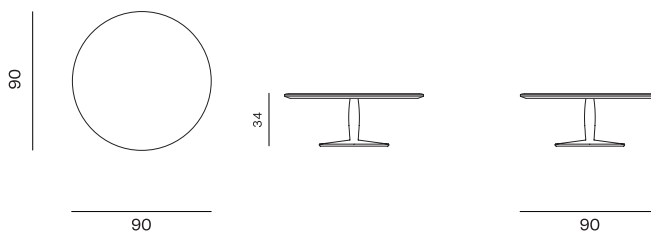
VR61 EASYCHAIR CUSHION



VR61 LOW TABLE
Ø 70 x 40 cm



VR61 LOW TABLE
Ø 90 x 34 cm



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Richter Soft by Nikola Đurek

Archive Images

Courtesy of the Museum of
Contemporary Art Zagreb

Product images

Vanja Šolin
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Revisiting Richter.

This is not about revisiting history,
but continuing a way of thinking.
Not homage, but activation.



prostoria