

August | Birkhäuser

PRODUCTS OF OUR TIME

The title 'PRODUCTS OF OUR TIME' is rendered in large, bold, sans-serif capital letters. Each letter is a cutout of a photograph showing a dense crowd of people, likely at a concert or festival. The colors are vibrant, with many people wearing red and blue clothing. The background of the cover is a solid, textured grey-blue.

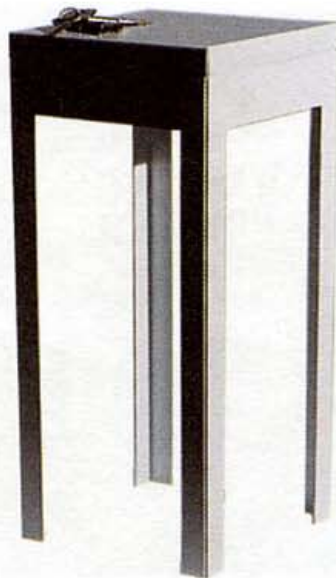
David Redhead

'Simplicity should become a permanent fashion'

Edward de Bono, 1998

Simplicity is finding new supporters far beyond design. Edward de Bono, veteran 'thinker about thinking' has published *Simplicity; a book* (a little ironically, his 59th) devoted to 'cutting through the needless complexity of modern life'. In it he proposes, among other things, 'ten rules of simplicity', a worldwide simplicity campaign and the establishment of National Simplicity Institutes all over the world.

All around us, simplicity has begun to mean big business and the bandwagon is continuing to gather momentum. Against this sort of cultural backdrop, some designers are continuing to develop the language of New Functionalism. Throughout the 1990s, designers continued to develop furniture less exclusive and sometimes less pricey than designer chairs of old. And perhaps surprisingly, even now that the economy has picked up, British shoppers seem more receptive to these ideas than ever. We like surrounding ourselves with all these so-called 'design-because-you-need-it' basics because they are cool and



Michael Anastassiades specialises in objects whose function is a good deal more sophisticated than their simple looks suggest. His wooden beakers (below) contain a recording and playback device for the exchange of messages within the domestic environment, while the alarm clock table (left) vibrates instead of producing an ordinary alarm sound: it only works as an alarm if something which rattles has been placed on the table top.

