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EDITORIAL

This modular marble furniture defies all your expectations of marble

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Australia, Furniture Design, Italy, Stone

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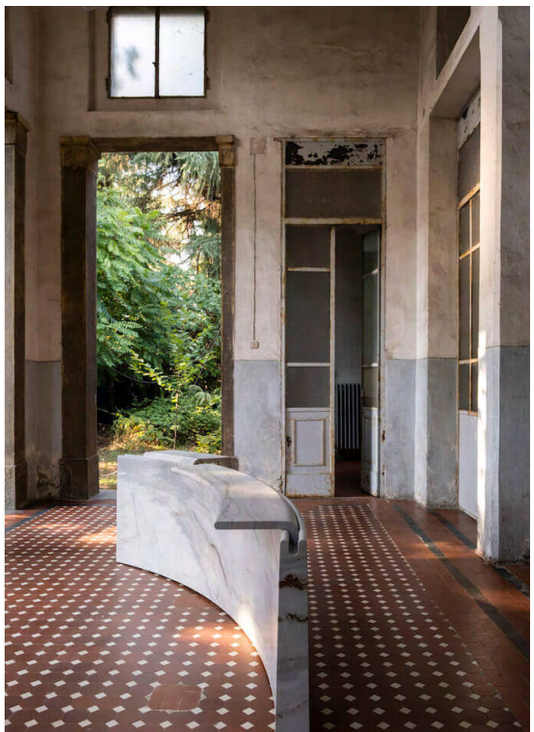
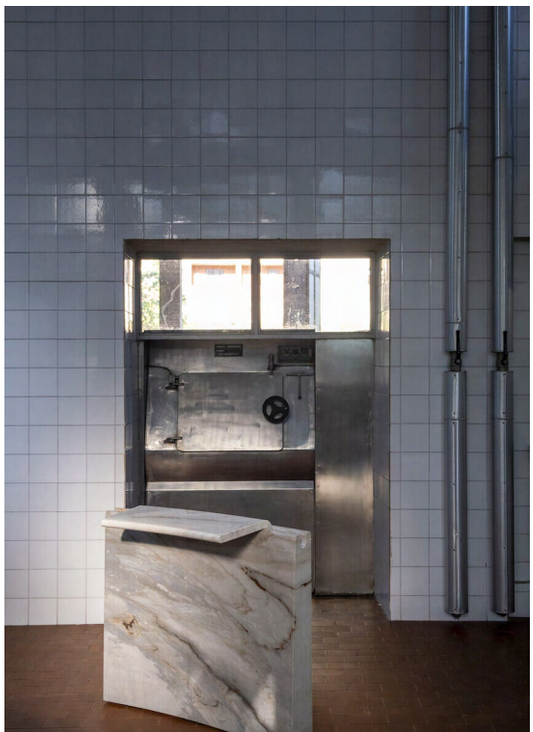
Australian designer Fred Ganim has developed a flexible furniture system handcrafted from marble using time-honoured, traditional techniques.

Marble doesn't spring to mind when you think of modular furniture, a notoriously heavy material that is difficult to manipulate. And yet, Australian furniture maker Fred Ganim has found a way to do just that. Partnering with London-based studio Agglomerati, together they have **unveiled a modular furniture system at Milan Design Week exploring the elemental nature of marble, its weight, and our modern capacity to manipulate it.**

The system, called MASS, **is constructed around a central radius and includes several elements available in multiple sizes**, which slot together to create lecterns, shelves or even tables. It is the studio's first collection of functional art objects made exclusively in stone, more specifically sculpted from Palissandro marble, sourced in one of northern Italy's foremost quarries, located near Bergamo.





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Fred Ganim and Agglomerati have unveiled a modular furniture system at Milan Design Week exploring marble, its weight, and our modern capacity to manipulate it – © Enrico Costantini

Each piece in the **MASS collection** is crafted by **Agglomerati**'s team of artisans **using avant-garde technologies and age-old techniques**. Upon the marble's extraction from the earth, it is cut into large cubic volumes, which **Ganim**'s concept reduces to create a modular system dependent on gravity and tension.

"Grounded by its weight, the sheer mass of the material uses gravity as a structural force, cantilevering a system of moveable shelves so that they appear to float parallel to the ground," the studio explains. *"**MASS is an open series that can be produced in several different sizes and a selection of other Italian marbles.**"*

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The system, called MASS, is constructed around a central radius and includes several elements available in multiple sizes, which slot together to create lecterns, shelves or even tables – ©Ben Westoby

Known for its 'less is more' approach, **Agglomerati** creates distinctive stone **furniture** characterised by geometric silhouettes. **It uses ancient techniques to craft its art-objects from time-honoured materials including a vast array of marbles and other stones.**

Alongside the main collection, Agglomerati collaborates with multidisciplinary artists like Ganim to create more functional art-objects in stone. **Its aim is to connect international creatives with northern Italy's craftspeople.**

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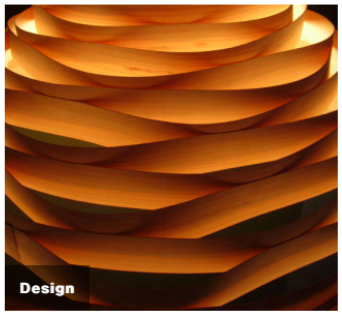

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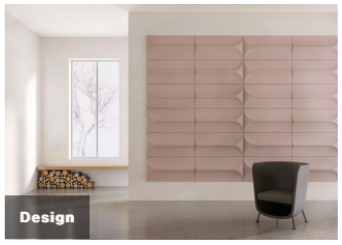

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Each piece in the MASS collection is crafted by Agglomerati's team of artisans using avant-garde technologies and age-old techniques – ©Mattia Parodi

The studio finds the perfect collaborator in Ganim who has a preference for clean lines and carefully constructed joints. Joinery, in particular, is a focus of his work, which largely informs the **MASS collection** where individual elements appear to flow seamlessly from and into one another.

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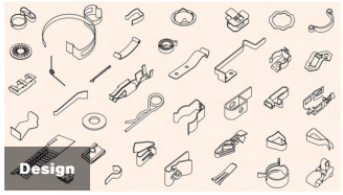

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Limited-edition piece based on the Round Table that Ganim created in 2015, carved from a single block of Brazilian Quartzite – ©Mattia Parodi

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AUTHOR

Kieron Marchese

Kieron is a freelance writer and Digital Consultant who doesn't consider himself a design lover but a user of design - which to him is more than enough. He completed his Bachelor's degree in Communications and Curation at Central Saint Martins and has since written for several design publications leading with an interest in the potential impact design could have on a better tomorrow.

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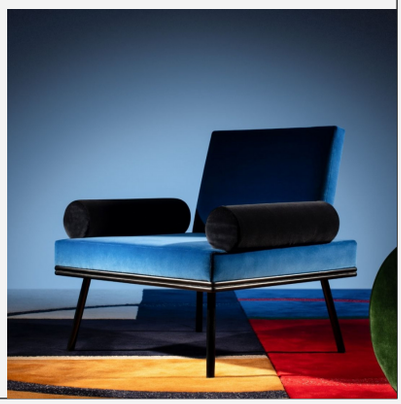

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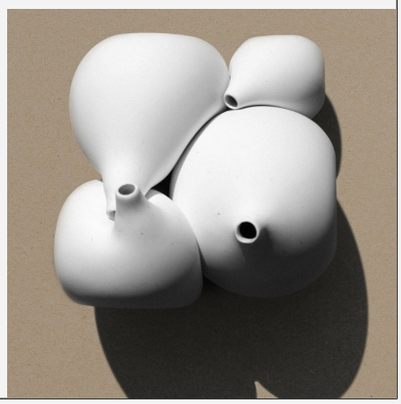

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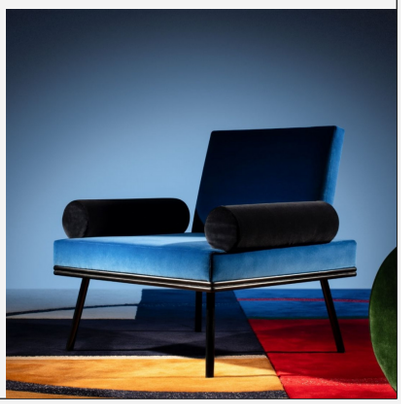

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