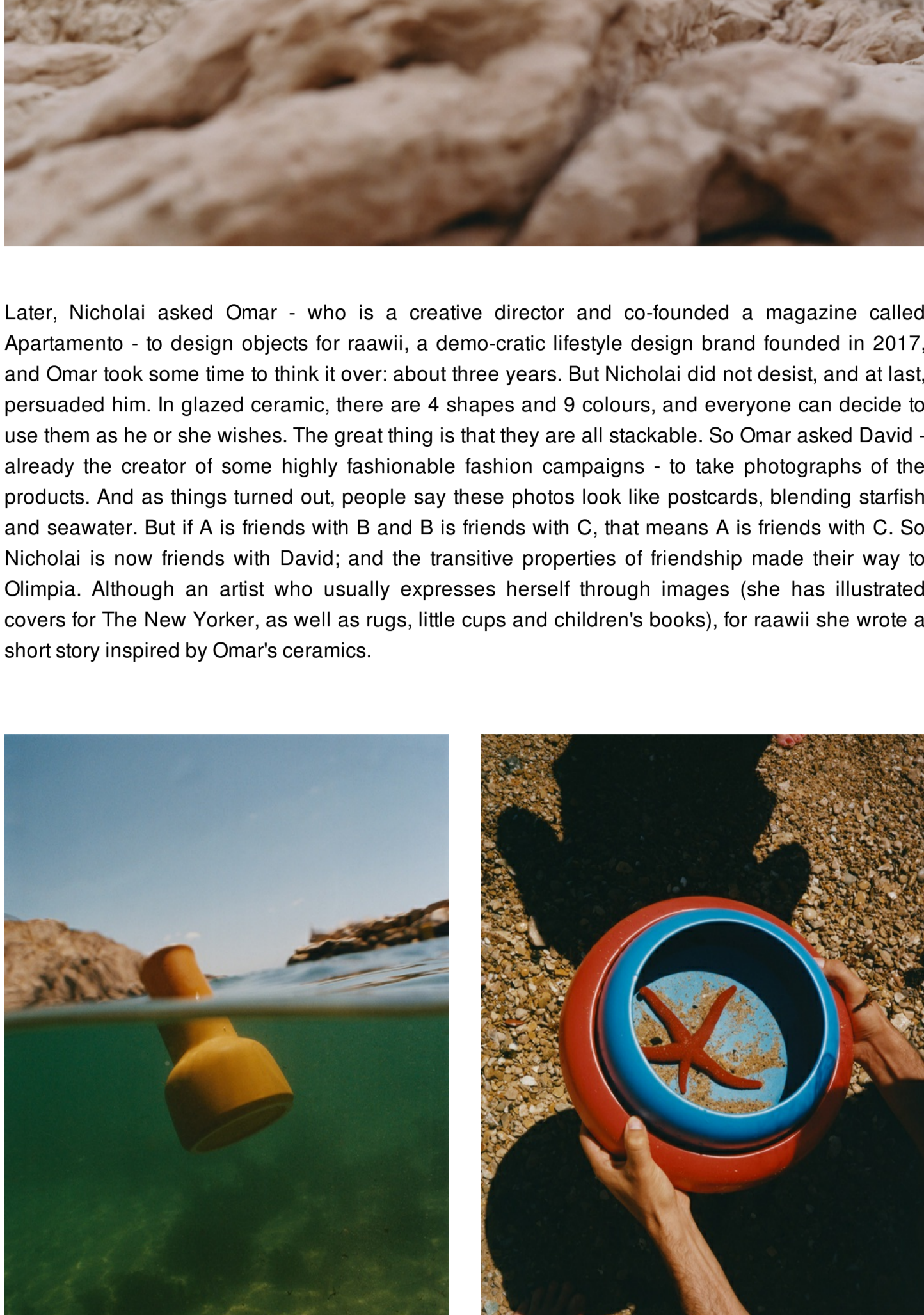


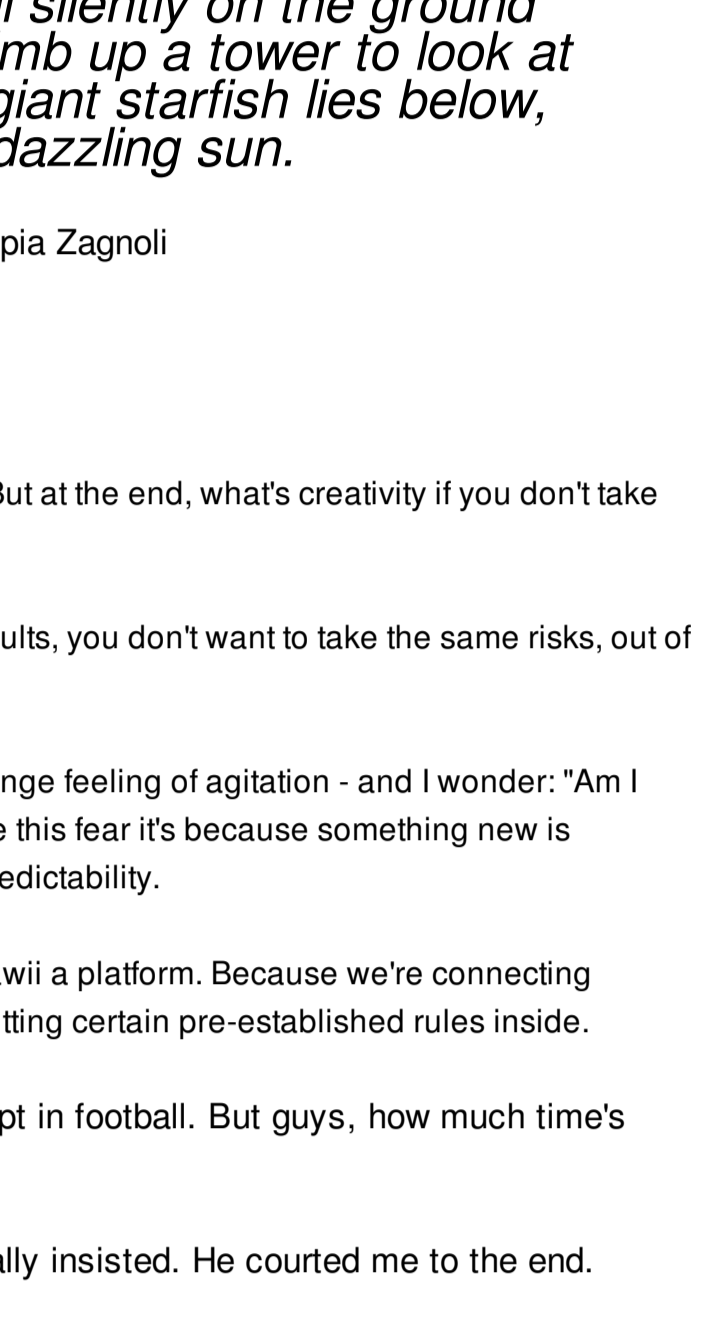
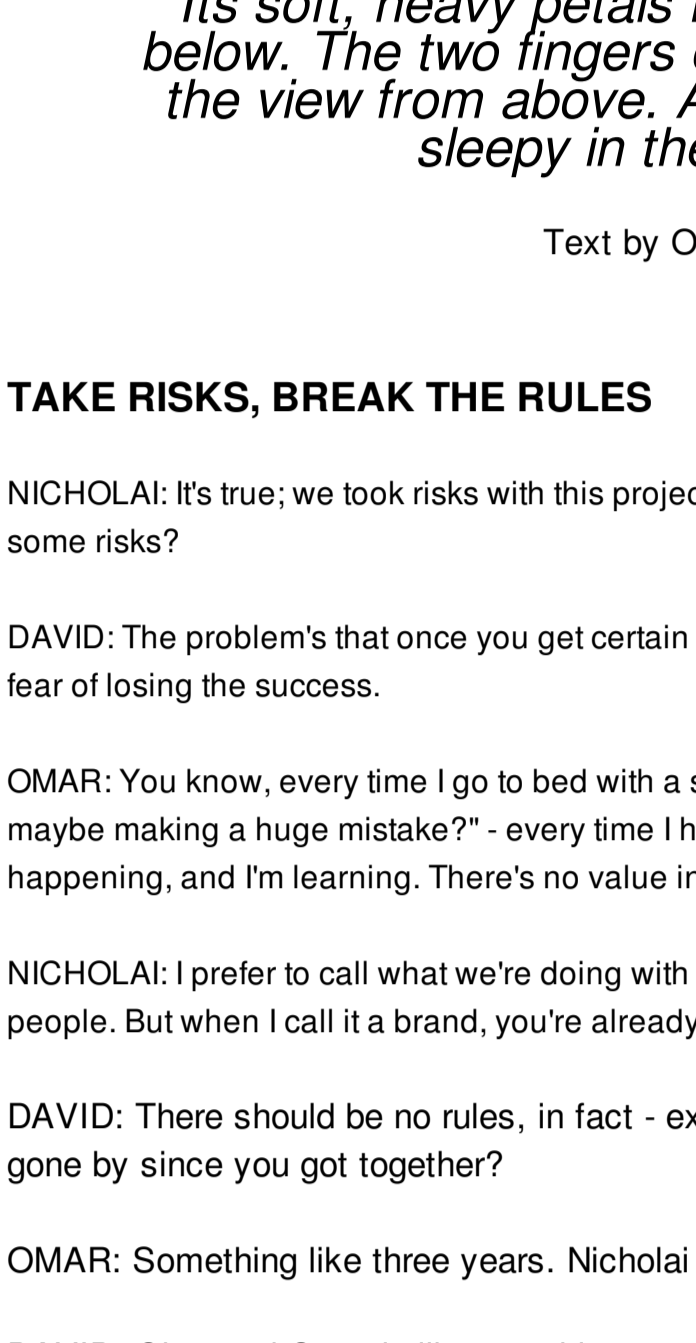
omar / raawii

A ceramic series designed by Omar Sosa for raawii with photography by David Luraschi and a short story by Olimpia Zagnoli

When Nicholai met Omar several years ago, the two were in Belgrade, and they began talking - and have never stopped. When Omar met David, they left for a trip to Egypt, and together they reflected on the things taught in yoga courses nowadays: how important it is to breathe, to stay anchored to the moment, and to "let go".



Later, Nicholai asked Omar - who is a creative director and co-founded a magazine called Apartamento - to design objects for raawii, a demo-craic lifestyle design brand founded in 2017, and Omar took some time to think it over: about three years. But Nicholai did not desist, and at last, persuaded him. In glazed ceramic, there are 4 shapes and 9 colours, and everyone can decide to use them as he or she wishes. The great thing is that they are all stackable. So Omar asked David - already the creator of some highly fashionable fashion campaigns - to take photographs of the products. And as things turned out, people say these photos look like postcards, blending starfish and seawater. But if A is friends with B and B is friends with C, that means A is friends with C. So Nicholai is now friends with David; and the transitive properties of friendship made their way to Olimpia. Although an artist who usually expresses herself through images (she has illustrated covers for The New Yorker, as well as rugs, little cups and children's books), for raawii she wrote a short story inspired by Omar's ceramics.



In this story, no one does what he or she is used to doing, because Nicholai has spurred them to experiment with their creative potential by expressing themselves in spheres other than the ones that are usual for them. After all, for Nicholai, with his partner Bo Raahauge, it is precisely this that he wants to do through raawii: to create a creativity platform, and he knows that collaborations, especially the most adventurous and unexpected ones, always give rise to something good. Lastly, we have decided to steal a few excerpts from a long conversation of theirs because it contains something very important for them. And it might function somewhat as a manifesto for raawii.

The index and the middle finger walk through a temporary city made of multicoloured arenas, glazed squares and cobalt chimneys. Windowless coliseums hide pools of tap water and forests of salad. A daisy peaks out of a satin smokestack. Its soft, heavy petals fall silently on the ground below. The two fingers climb up a tower to look at the view from above. A giant starfish lies below, sleepy in the dazzling sun.

Text by Olimpia Zagnoli

TAKE RISKS, BREAK THE RULES

NICHOLAI: It's true; we took risks with this project. But at the end, what's creativity if you don't take some risks?

DAVID: The problem's that once you get certain results, you don't want to take the same risks, out of fear of losing the success.

OMAR: You know, every time I go to bed with a strange feeling of agitation - and I wonder: "Am I maybe making a huge mistake?" - every time I have this fear it's because something new is happening, and I'm learning. There's no value in predictability.

NICHOLAI: I prefer to call what we're doing with raawii a platform. Because we're connecting people. But when I call it a brand, you're already putting certain pre-established rules inside.

DAVID: There should be no rules, in fact - except in football. But guys, how much time's gone by since you got together?

OMAR: Something like three years. Nicholai really insisted. He courted me to the end.

DAVID: Oh, wow! Sounds like a real love story.

NICHOLAI: You know, when I started raawii I already had a long experience behind me in the design world, and I had observed how brands moved. I was sure of one thing: my goal was to make room for creativity. And maybe to break those preconceived notions... Omar, you say "I'm not a designer," but what the hell does that mean? You're creative, you have an eye, and I wanted a poet even before I wanted a designer. It could have ended up well or badly, but what would we have lost?

DAVID: It's no accident that our inspiration, between the lines in this work, is John Baldessari. At a certain point in his career, the Californian artist burned everything he'd done: forget what you have learned and go by instinct, he said. Focusing on the rules and on what we already know makes us forget everything more authentic than we have to say.



PROPORTIONS: THE SECRET OF GOOD DESIGN

OMAR: In making these products, we placed our faith in the process. Only one of the articles was created with a purpose in mind. I wanted a vessel that wasn't heavy but had stability, to be able to put water in on the night table. After that, the shapes were dictated by the process. Working with a lathe, the round forms came naturally; there was no need for computers or rendering. We saw the articles arise from the material. I think that this work was above all one of love and detail: we concentrated a great deal on proportions, which are everything to us. We did not work by trial and error, but rather by relying on instinct. Maybe that's why, in the pieces we created, I feel a sort of primitive energy.

NICHOLAI: If you trust the process, everything falls into place.

OMAR: Do you remember, Nicholai, when I said "It was fast," and you replied, "No, it took you your whole life"? And in fact, you can take twenty minutes, two hours or two days to do a job, but in the long run, you put your whole life experience into it.

KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN

NICHOLAI: You see, maybe you have a plan - I don't know, going to Mars, say. But while you're planning how to get there, you discover a whole set of other things. Everything you do opens new roads. In the long run, it is essential to always stay open-minded and ready to change plans.

DAVID: That's what I say, too. When for example I'm doing a photo shoot, I make sure all the elements are on the set, but then I leave room for unforeseen events, or "accidents" - because it's what you don't plan and not what you plan that's the real essence of a job, and you always have to be prepared to grasp it. Just putting together two elements that usually don't go together, to create something new.

OMAR: In advertising campaigns, every single thing is normally planned, and it takes months to get to the set. But for us it was all very spontaneous; we told ourselves: these are the ingredients we find ourselves with, and we see what happens.

DAVID: Omar, I reflected a lot after our trip to Egypt, when we also thought about the meaning of "letting go," and that stayed with me. With these photographs, we left room for instinct.

NICHOLAI: And that's why it's not an "advertising campaign" in the most obvious sense, but it's something else. We should do it more often: I intend to create a space for creative freedom, to challenge himself and captivate the industry with a diverse range of designs: from chairs and tables to lamps and vacuum jugs. Examples include the popular Jules desk chair and the equally popular PS Locker for IKEA, the Sintra table for Frama, the Night Owl lamp for Fritz Hansen and the Geo vacuum jug for Normann Copenhagen. Archetypal products - with a twist. Proportions and colours are always carefully considered and details are only added if they serve a functional or aesthetic purpose.



THE CREATIVE CLIENT

OMAR: In this connection, I don't want people to think we created these items with a purpose in mind. Everyone can use them as they like - to put salad in or feed their dog with; it doesn't matter.

DAVID: The fact that you don't want to sell a design piece for a certain, specific function allows you to "activate" those who'll be buying this item, thus getting them involved and making them become designers in their own turn.

NICHOLAI: After all, 99% of the people who will buy raawii won't be interested in what we're saying now. If they like something, they just pick it up and take it home. They react to the shape, the colour, and so on. In what we do, it's the final result that counts, and not what's behind it. And raawii aims to be democratic design and "value for money." We don't need so many objects, but objects done better, that last longer.



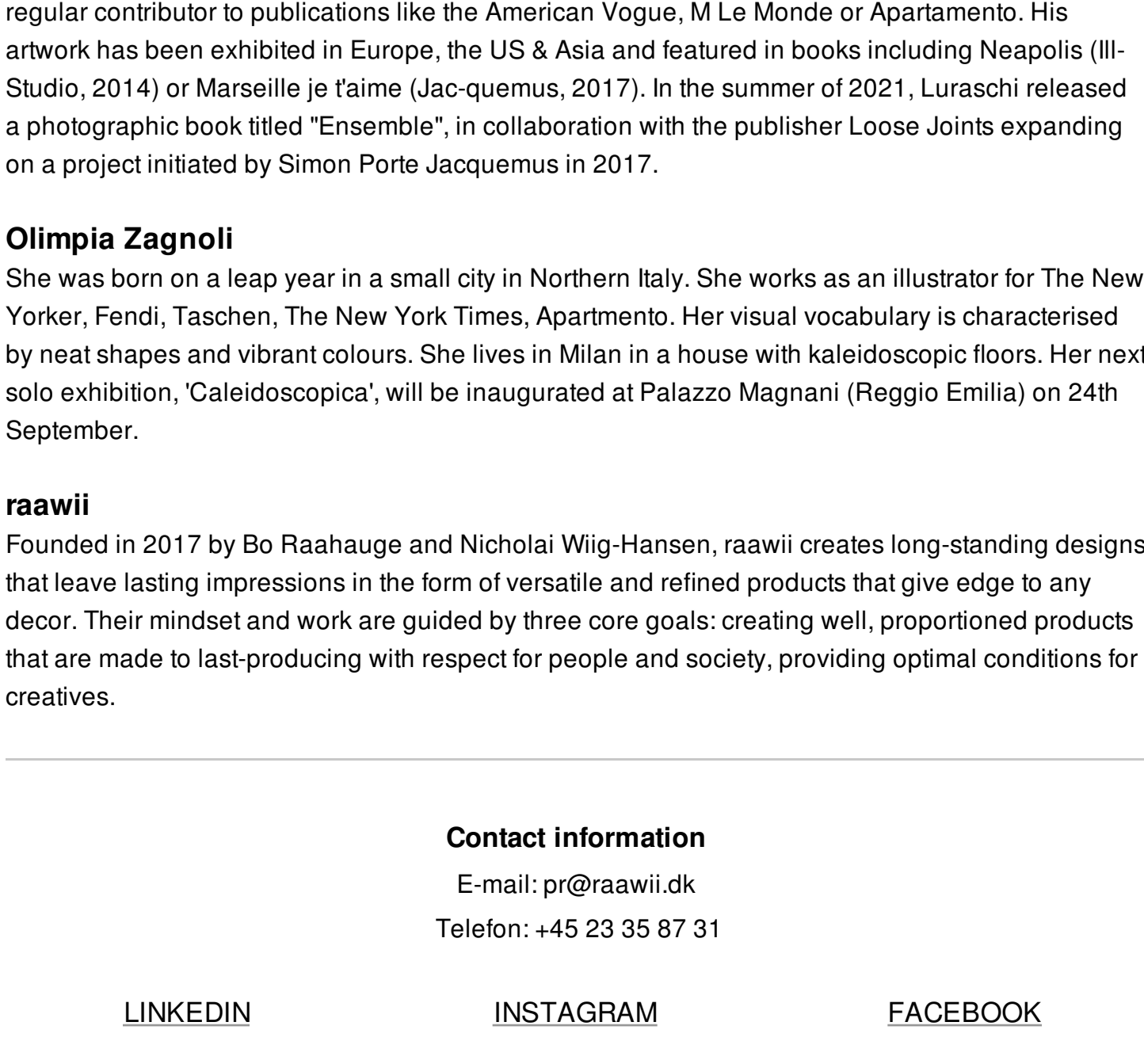
CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

OMAR: I think that, in essence, there is respect between us for how we see life and the passion we put into our work: friends spur you to go beyond your limits.

NICHOLAI: Exactly. And you know what else we have in common? An excellent eye. Whether someone's taking pictures, doing yoga, making things, or making things, the secret lies in having an eye. Of course, friendship has counted a lot in our collaboration.

DAVID: I personally believe it's good fortune to have a job that affords me the possibility of evolving through friendship: on the one hand, because I can work with people I call friends, and at the same time because I discover new friends through the work. It's gratifying to be able to cross paths with those who perhaps don't belong to my environment, but from whom I can learn a lot. It's already happened, just as it happened that I found mentors who were younger than me. And I hope it continues to happen.

NICHOLAI: In the final analysis, it's thanks to the friendship that binds us that we've been able to do what we did; because it can go well or badly, but what is failing, at the end? It's just trying. The problem isn't failing; it's not failing enough.



THE PROTAGONISTS

Nicholai Wiig-Hansen

Nicholai Wiig-Hansen founded his own design studio in 1990. Since then, he has continued to challenge himself and captivate the industry with a diverse range of designs: from chairs and tables to lamps and vacuum jugs. Examples include the popular Jules desk chair and the equally popular PS Locker for IKEA, the Sintra table for Frama, the Night Owl lamp for Fritz Hansen and the Geo vacuum jug for Normann Copenhagen. Archetypal products - with a twist. Proportions and colours are always carefully considered and details are only added if they serve a functional or aesthetic purpose.

Omar Sosa

Barcelona born creative director, editor and publisher. In 2008, he co-founded the seminal interiors publication Apartamento. In addition to publishing Apartamento, Omar has edited and designed a number of books including Nathalie Du Pasquier: Don't Take These Drawings Seriously (PowerHouse) and Patricia Urquiola: It's Time To Make a Book (Rizzoli). In 2020 he curated a group show called Comfort at Friedman Benda. Omar Sosa works as Creative Director for a number of design, lifestyle and real state companies under Apartamento's design agency Apartamento Studios.

David Luraschi

He is a French-American photographer based in Paris, France. He holds a BA in Film Studies from San Francisco State University, California and a MA in Art Direction from Ecal, Switzerland. He is a regular contributor to publications like the American Vogue, M Le Monde or Apartamento. His artwork has been exhibited in Europe, the US & Asia and featured in books including Neapolis (Jill-Studio, 2014) or Marseille je t'aime (Jac-quemus, 2017). In the summer of 2021, Luraschi released a photographic book titled "Ensemble", in collaboration with the publisher Loose Joints expanding on a project initiated by Simon Porte Jacquemus in 2017.

Olimpia Zagnoli

She was born on a leap year in a small city in Northern Italy. She works as an illustrator for The New Yorker, Fendi, Taschen, The New York Times, Apartamento. Her visual vocabulary is characterised by neat shapes and vibrant colours. She lives in Milan in a house with kaleidoscopic floors. Her next solo exhibition, 'Caleidoscopica', will be inaugurated at Palazzo Magnani (Reggio Emilia) on 24th September.

raawii

Founded in 2017 by Bo Raahauge and Nicholai Wiig-Hansen, raawii creates long-standing designs that leave lasting impressions in the form of versatile and refined products that give edge to any decor. Their mindset and work are guided by three core goals: creating well, proportioned products that are made to last-producing with respect for people and society, providing optimal conditions for creatives.

Contact information

E-mail: pr@raawii.dk

Telefon: +45 23 35 87 31

[LINKEDIN](#)

[INSTAGRAM](#)

[FACEBOOK](#)

Show in webbrowser

Unsubscribe