

CLAESSON KOIVISTO RUNE

Mårten Claesson, Eero Koivisto and Ola Rune met as architecture students at Stockholm's Konstfack university two decades ago and today, their practice Claesson Koivisto Rune (CKR) covers a plethora of typologies from mobile phones to tableware, furniture and cavernous buildings all across the world. So revered is their design language that Paola Antonelli, design curator of MoMA, noted: "They are the epitome of the aesthetics of the new millennium".

The first Swedish architectural office invited to exhibit at the international section of the Venice Biennale of Architecture in 2004, their aesthetic has been dubbed as fluid — inspired in part by nature's organic forms that result in clean and linear shapes sometimes tempered by feminine, sinuous lines for a graceful form.

Case in point, this year's Bonsai sofa and armchair for Arflex, which bears close resemblance to the cloud-like shape of bushes and shrubs found in gardens all over Japan. Most will also remember CKR's Haven armchair and sofa for the house of Paola Lenti, renowned for its outdoor products.

Visually airy and lightweight, the seats feature a membrane-like woven fabric stretched over a frame to create strikingly ethereal forms.

More than just hired guns, the trio have also launched Smaller Objects, a label of useful design objects for the home. A unique business model inspired by the sharing economy, it allows designers to earn 75 percent of the proceeds of their products, rather than the standard royalty of five percent or less. "It's a new era, demanding new business models and new methods of working. Smaller Objects sees the designer as an entrepreneur, active not only in the designing, but also in the development and business processes," explained Rune.

While CKR designed the brand's first collection of household items, this year's Stockholm Design Week saw the introduction of the new compensation model and wares by designers including Nendo and Giulio Cappellini. The trio's own wine cooler for the label is made from soapstone and can be left in the fridge or freezer overnight and then used without ice or cold water.



Clockwise from far left: Hug
armchairs for Arflex; CRR: Cold
Cooler for Smaller Objects, the
CRR-founded label inspired by
the sharing economy; Bonsai
seating for Arflex

