

MARIO BELLINI DESIGN EXPLAINED TO CHILDREN

A big name of Italian design
tells kids all about his way
of looking at nature
and at the world to take ideas
and hints to materialize
into projects.



MARIO BELLINI (Milan, 1935) is a world-famous architect and designer. He won eight Compasso d'Oro prizes and twenty-five of his objects are shown in the MoMA permanent collection. He was director of “Domus” magazine from 1985 to 1991. In 2015 he was awarded the Honorary Golden Medal by the Triennale di Milano which, in 2017, dedicated him a retrospective that is going to tour around the world. He works with the most important design companies and many of his architectural projects are currently underway both in Italy and abroad.

How to draw a chair?

And why to draw a chair?

Where do ideas feeding a designer's mind come from?

How to look at the world to make it better through everyday objects?

Mario Bellini answers these questions in his first book for children: a travel into his world through photographs and drawings to catch the beauty and essential of those everyday objects we don't even stop to contemplate.



ERIKA PITTIS was born in Udine where she lives and works. She worked as a graphic designer and illustrator in Paris with Lorenzo Mattotti. She is now a graphic designer and founded the creative space Little Busy bBees with Nicola Boccaccini, a meeting point for photography, graphic design, art and illustration.

HOUSES HAVE A FACE, TOO.

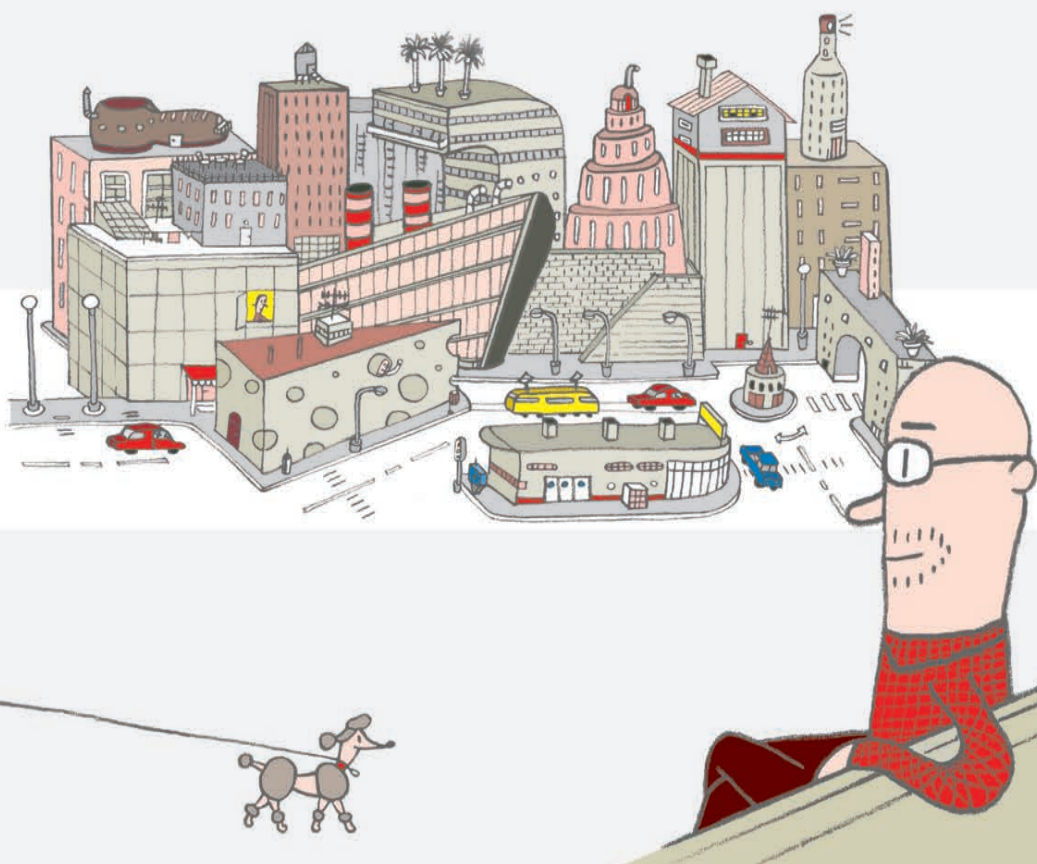
That's why we call it façade. That is, windows, verandas, front doors. If houses have faces it means they are a little like people. Look at the houses you see when strolling around the town: some have windows and balconies that look like they're smiling, some others have just one door and a few windows and seem a bit sadder. They all have a mouth opening and closing: their front door.

Some windows have cornices and decorations:



the eyebrows. And up higher they have hats and hairs.
You know what they are: roofs, protecting them
from sun and rain. (So people sometimes are houses.
Sometimes they are.)

Many houses and buildings together form a city.
Some buildings are truly weird and if you look
at them closely they look like something else.
By travelling and getting to know different worlds
from our own we can borrow ideas and things
we like in order to use them to embellish our town.



CLOUDS RAINING LIGHT, NOT RAIN.

When darkness comes we must switch on the light.
I don't like lamps showing their bulbs because they hurt
our eyes. So I have always designed lamps as I like,
by working first on how getting the right light when it's
dark and secondly on what form to give it.



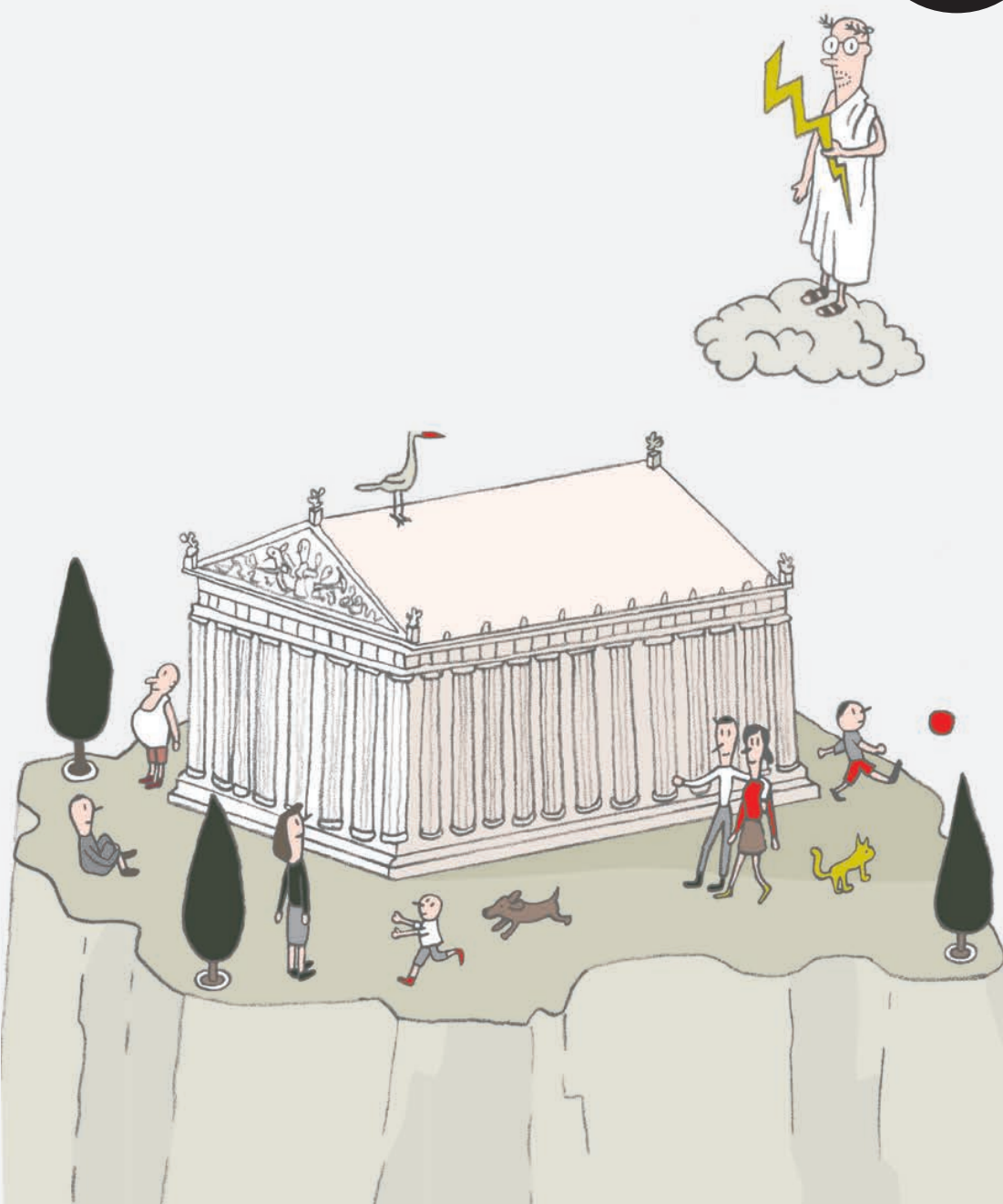


So I designed a nun-shaped lamp emitting light from its white hat, another one looking like a well-lit tissue floating in the air. And another one which is a magic cloud to hang on your ceiling. Just like the ones you see in the sky, but my clouds rain light, not rain.

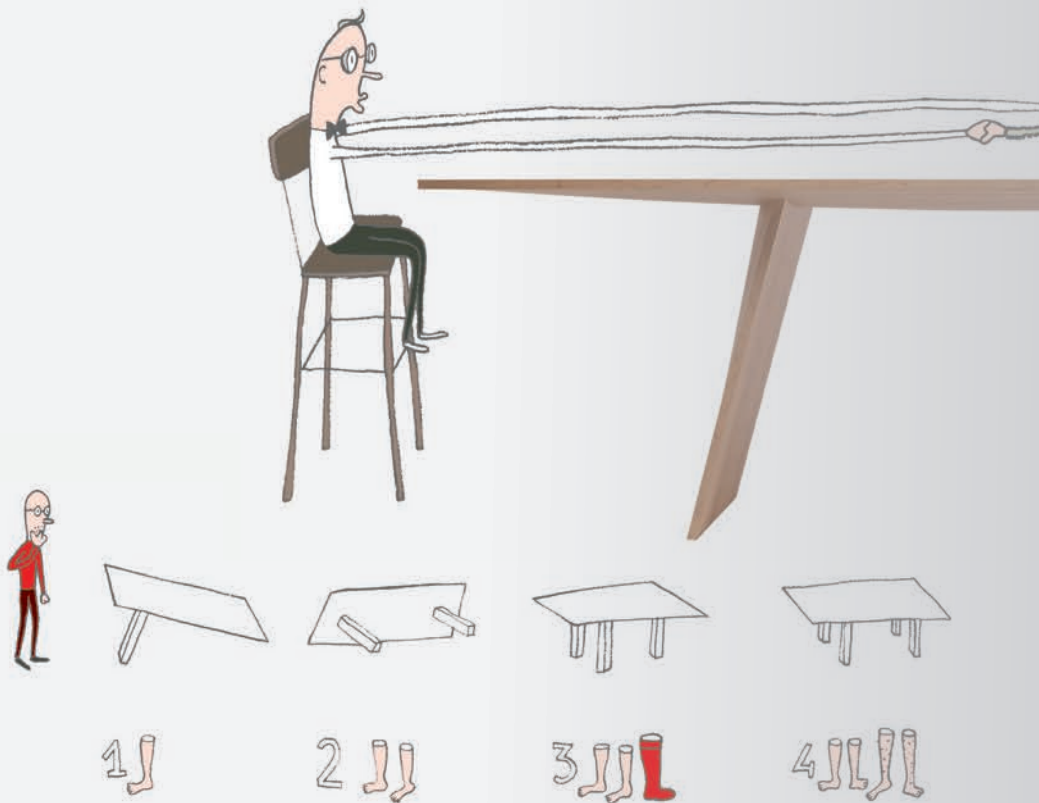
LANDSCAPES OF ARMCHAIRS, CHAIRS, TABLES.

The things surrounding us very often look like other things we saw during our travels all around the world. Sometimes big things. Have you ever played under a table? Tables are like little houses with their roofs. And sometimes table legs can be columns. A table may be a little house named architecture.





One thinks a table should always have four legs not to fall. Well, three it's enough to stand. I, though, designed also an eight-legged table because it reminded me of cathedrals and ancient temples... Or a bridge-shaped table. In the end, a table is a bridge joining people. And, on it, these people play, make their homeworks, cook, eat, talk, quarrel.



Have you ever thought of living without a table in your home? Impossible. And more so. Tables have been existing since forever. They were born together with houses and if you see many different tables nowadays you should always remember that they all were made out of the same need of sitting, alone or with other people, around a flat surface where to lay hands and things.



To properly use a table you need chairs. Chairs have little feet, legs, seats, armrests, seatbacks. Just like the feet, legs, bottom, arms and back we have. They are thought to make our body comfortable. How many different kinds of chairs have you seen at home or at your friends' or at school? Many kinds, I am sure of it. But they are all related to the first ones...



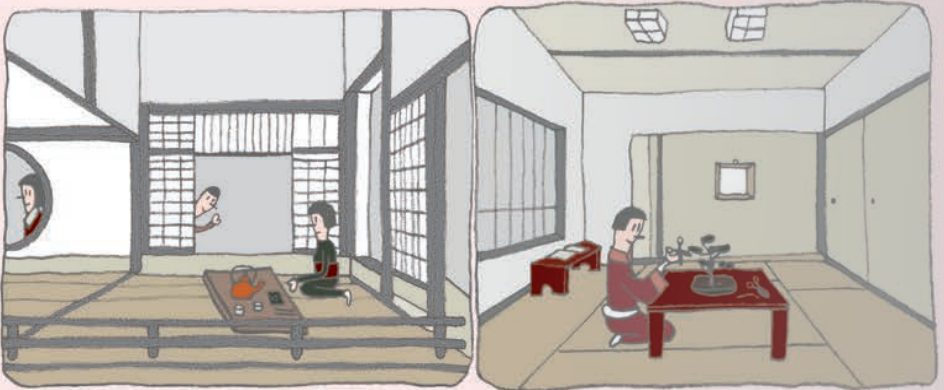
The first chairs were invented in China about five thousand years ago. One of the chairs I praise most is the one of a rich important lord of Ancient Egypt. I like it because it looks a lot like ours. It made important people comfortable (chairs weren't for everybody) and it would still be comfortable nowadays. This means that the passing of time will never change too much the chairs we all use and know so well.

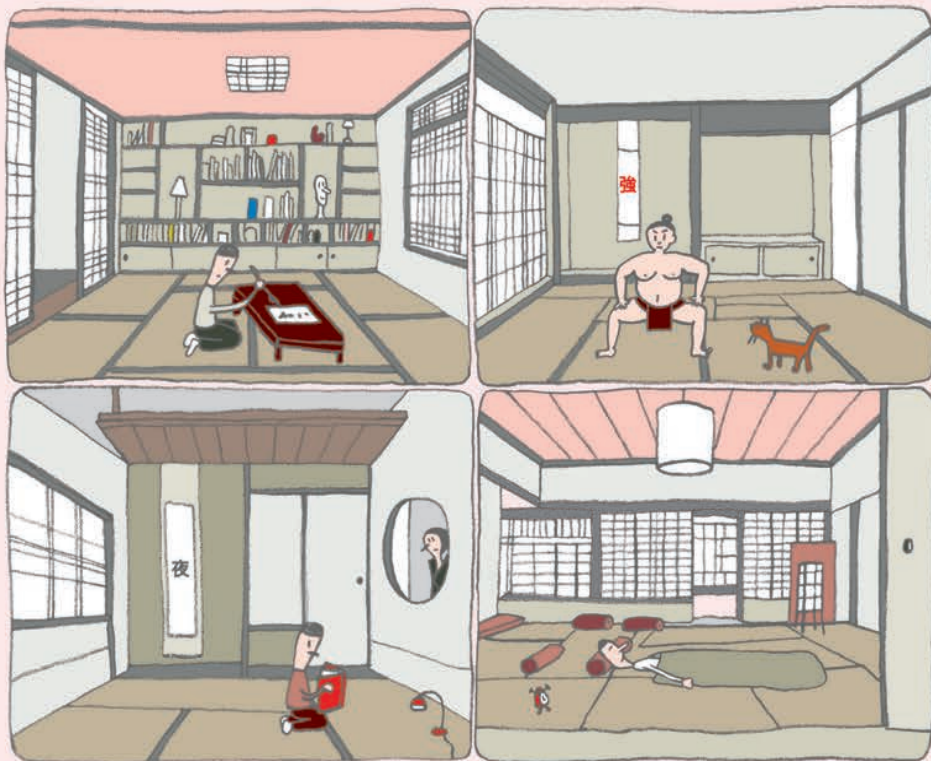




THE TALE OF THE CHAIRLESS COUNTRY.

Now I'll tell you about a faraway country where people don't have chairs in their houses nor table like ours: Japan. In that country everybody sits on the floor, cross-legged. Floor is always clean and shining and covered with soft carpets of woven straw. Nobody ever enters a house wearing his or her shoes: they must be left outside. On the floor they do everything





we do on a table: they play, they do their homeworks, they eat (not with fork and knife but with two chopsticks). And then, when the night comes, they sleep on the floor. In Japan not even beds are like ours. In fact, they don't have beds. They sleep on those clean and shining floors smelling like rice straw, with just one light mat and a roll filled with cherry pits to lean their heads on.

