

onOffice

SEPTEMBER 2019 | ONOFFICEMAGAZINE.COM

ARCHITECTURE & DESIGN AT WORK

£4.50

Singapore the garden city

Does this Asian city
hold the answers to
saving our cities
and planet?

THE
URBAN
ISSUE

SITTING PRETTY

A round-up of this year's top seating solutions

PLOT ART

The 9th edition of *Sculpture in the City* returns to London

MILES AHEAD

How BMW builds its plug-in hybrid sports car i8

SHOWS

Social enterprise

Rising studio Kyohei & Miranda is taking on the world at 100% Design. Kyohei Kazama and Miranda Pearson explain



↑ Kyohei & Miranda's Elegance round oak table

What inspired your new collection for 100% Design 2019?

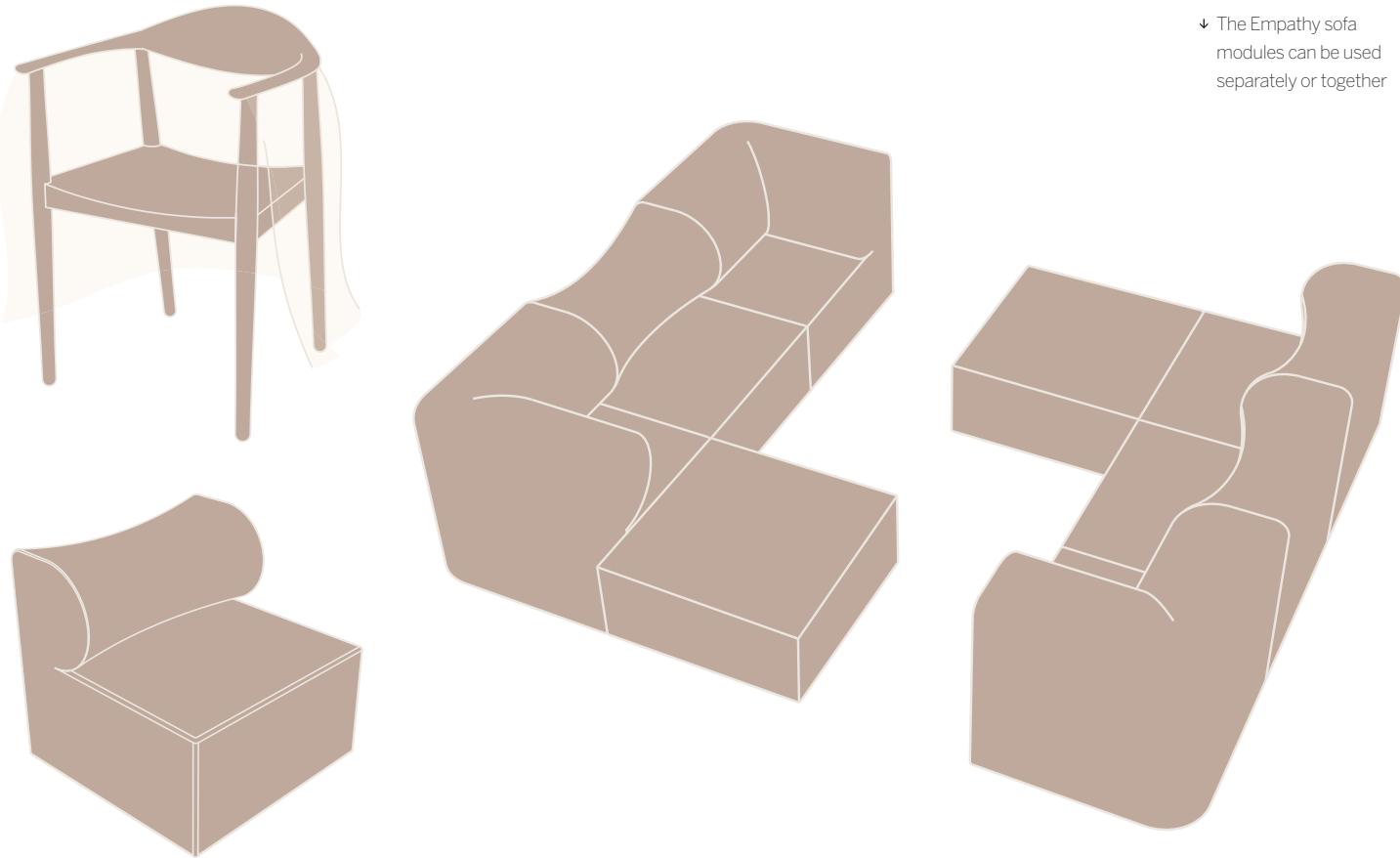
This year's topic is community and society. We believe people are lost these days and cannot find their place because society seems unable to achieve three factors at the same time: globalisation, nation states and democratic politics.

We designed a sofa and glassware using practical design language, while the dining chair has a little bit of an artsy finish. The

modular sofa, called Empathy, adds a relaxing element to the office environment by providing a small space to chat at work. It also brings the workstation to the home office. The glassware, Respect, is designed for toasting, while the dining chair, Ghost, is a critical piece of art, which can be used and altered as time passes.

What message are you hoping to share at 100% Design?

We often take into account issues ⊕



↑ The studio's Ghost dining chair (top) can be altered as time passes

of today in design schemes and establish core concepts from those. Our studio believes designs should have the power to improve our circumstances, so we would like to team up with others in this industry and work on common causes.

Empathy, your new modular sofa series, was created around the concept of 'difference in harmony'. Can you explain what this means?

We wish for a society where different people can coexist in chaotic harmony. As a result of a strikingly practical interpretation of the concept, we designed a modular sofa series. Each sofa works by itself but can also work when it is unified – like people in society. We recommend different combinations of fabrics as they work in chaotic harmony and enhance any space interactively.

If you put our modular sofa Empathy in an office, the corner sofa's backrest can be used as a

laptop work station, and the curved backrest can lead to small chats among people leaning on it.

The urban environment is one of the key concepts in your design schemes. However, it maintains a strong connection with nature. How do you create harmony and respect between the two?

The harmonies are made by balancing. We bring a natural touch to urban lives whilst in country life, we appreciate modern tastes. We think urban lifestyles have physical benefits like convenience, whereas country lifestyles have psychological benefits, such as relaxation.

As for the furniture, we create harmony by mixing Japanese and British features: simple clean design and natural ageing materials.

At Kyohei & Miranda, you recognise the importance of minority groups. You have a strong sense of questioning the

↓ The Empathy sofa modules can be used separately or together

"Each modular sofa works by itself but can also work when it is unified – like people in society"

majority by breaking barriers in your designs. How do you achieve this?

We still seek better ways to achieve it as a business. We design to enrich people's lives through our designs, which are like characters who have their own personalities. They are just products but when you remember their voices in your busy life, life could become a little more meaningful.

We would like to include everyone in that. Dramatic changes will not happen but we can challenge dismantling the psychological barrier by questioning our design schemes. We aim to collaborate with companies that share our values because it is not something we can do by ourselves. Having exhibitions and an opportunity like this is also one step forward to spreading our ideas. □

100% Design is at Olympia, London, from 18-21 September. 100percentdesign.co.uk