

Living It Large In Small Spaces

Furniture distributor Domo teamed up with Melbourne interior design studio Hecker Guthrie to present an exhibition of curated Ligne Roset furniture pieces in a temporary apartment setting.

words CASSIE HANSEN photography SHANNON MCGRATH



1_ THE EXHIBITION
PRESENTED A CAREFULLY
CURATED SELECTION OF
LIGNE ROSET FURNITURE.



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2_ IN THE TEMPORARY LOFT APARTMENT, CUSTOM-MADE TIMBER FRAMES HELPED DEFINE THE DIFFERENT ZONES.

It's an appealing idea: furniture company teams up with interior designers to create a temporary loft in trendy Melbourne suburb, demonstrating what luxury apartment living can be like. No swift salespeople like you might find in a showroom, no competing brands two shopfronts down, and definitely no pressure to purchase – simply a space in which the visitor can admire the furniture. This was the idea for *Living It Large In Small Spaces*, a two-week exhibition held on the upper floor of Allpress Melbourne Roastery in September 2014, presenting a curated suite of classic and contemporary Ligne Roset furniture.

Like kids in a candy store, Hamish Guthrie and Paul Hecker, directors of interior design studio Hecker Guthrie, were given the enviable task of selecting pieces of Ligne Roset furniture for display in each of the exhibition's five settings: eating, sleeping, living, working and outdoors.

Having been long-time admirers of Ligne Roset, Hecker and Guthrie saw the exhibition as a chance to show off the French company's furniture in an apartment context. Before starting work, however, they

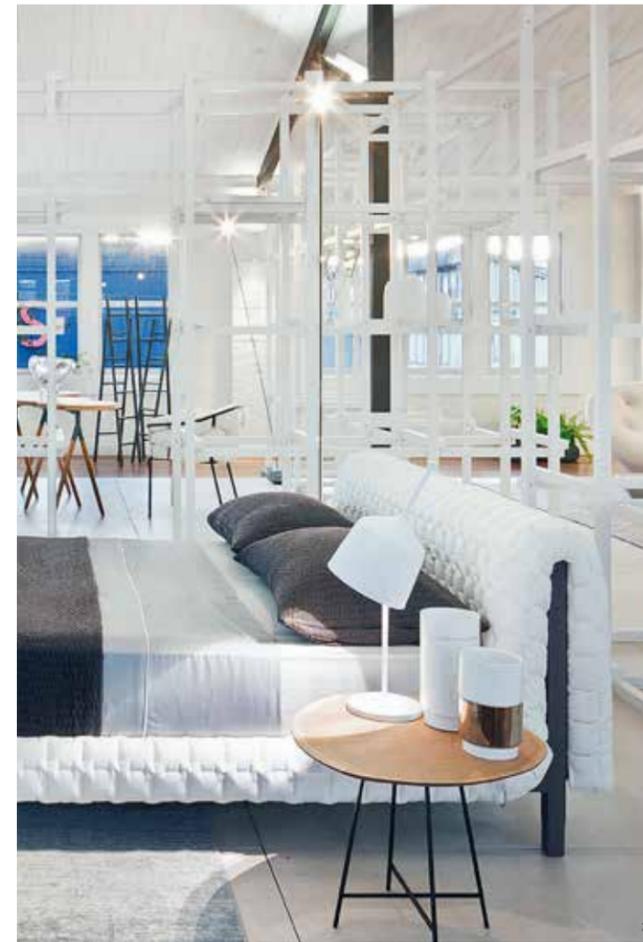
met with Ligne Roset export director Bernard Vinson in Paris, where the team garnered a deeper appreciation for the brand.

"When you start looking in depth at the collection, there's such a strong level of innovation, not just in terms of a design perspective, but also a technology perspective where the materials are so well integrated into the form and expression of the pieces," says Guthrie.

For Guthrie, spending time in Paris also reinforced the differences in the way that Europeans and Australians approach living in compact spaces – an idea that was explored in the exhibition.

"In Europe, people acquire a collection of furniture pieces as they go on their journey of life, and those pieces talk to different stages of their life. I think that's a nice thing about quality pieces of furniture like those of Ligne Roset – that they're not disposable. You don't move into your first apartment then throw them out when you move to the next," he says.

"In Australia, we're now seeing apartments in a more European way. It's now a very viable, permanent living



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3_ THE ICONIC RUCHÉ BED IN THE EXHIBITION'S BEDROOM ZONE.

4_ THE DINING ZONE FEATURED CLUSTERS OF ITISY TABLES.

5_ THE OUTDOOR ZONE INCLUDED THE JEAN BAPTISTE PLANTER AND GRILLAGE CHAIRS.



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solution, not only for singles, but also for couples and even families."

For the exhibition, Hecker Guthrie chose strong, expressive pieces from the Ligne Roset collection, including the Ploum sofa and the quilt-like Ruché bed.

The decision to use furniture in neutral colours was twofold: firstly, the designers avoided bold colours as they associated this with tactics a showroom might use to grab the attention of customers; and secondly, the neutral colours helped express the sculptural forms of the furniture. It was another way in which this exhibition bolstered itself as primarily an apartment space rather than a showroom floor.

While the idea of a temporary, loft-like furniture exhibition may not be new, it certainly fulfilled its aim. Without the noise of a greater showroom setting, the customer was put in isolation, engaging with the brand and furniture within a defined context and, in doing so, capturing their imagination and their attention. **A**

Artichoke magazine was a media sponsor for *Living It Large In Small Spaces*.



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