

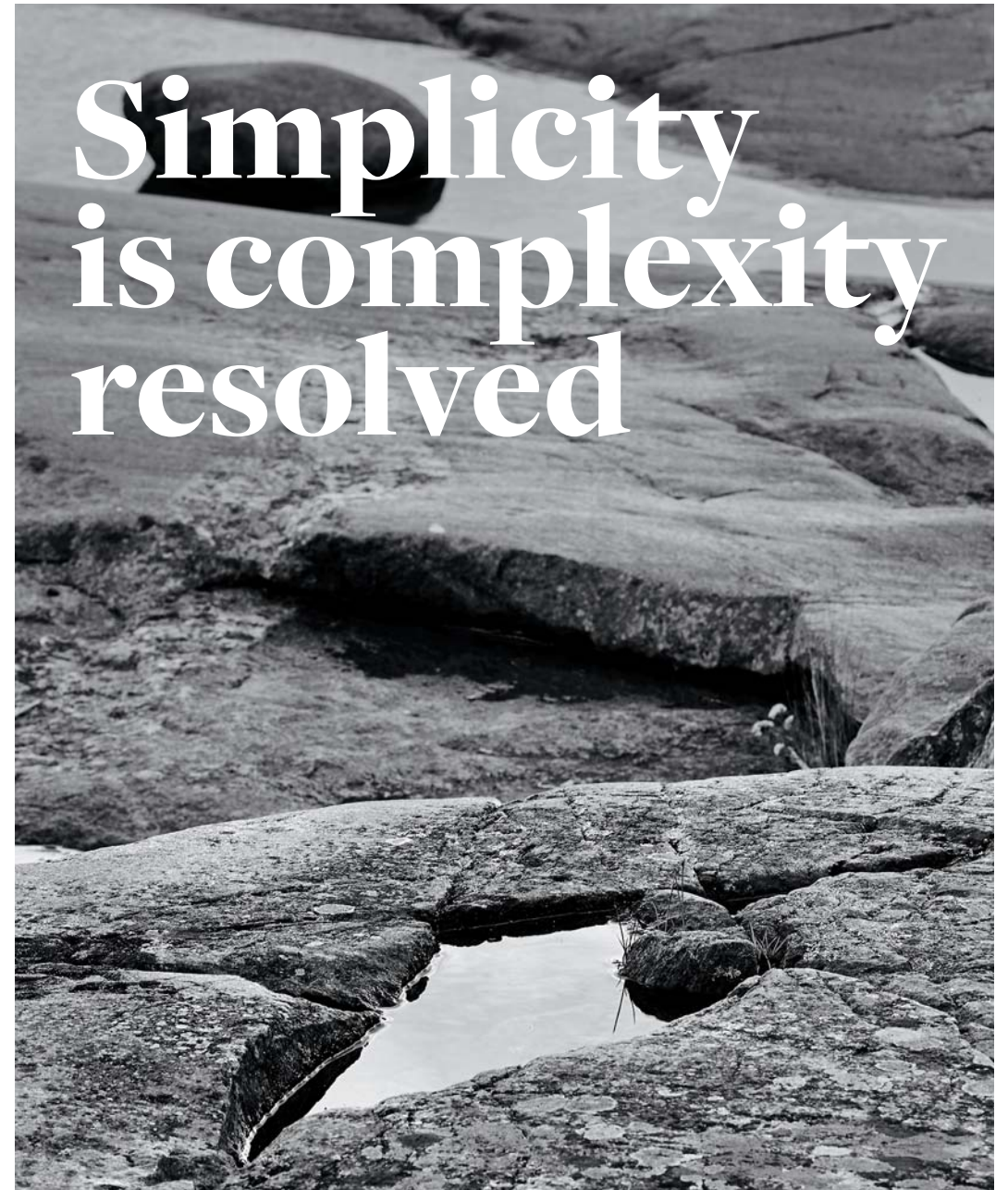
PIIROINEN



reddot award 2017
winner

Pi Collection

Design by
FOKlab





Diederik Fokkema
partner at FOKlab,
Fokkema & Partners Architecten

The idea within the design

Dutch architect Diederik Fokkema has designed hundreds of offices and created internationally renowned architecture

“OBVIOUS BUT UNEXPECTED” is how he describes his design philosophy. Objects, spaces and user interfaces must be both comprehensible and functional.

“Good products do not raise questions, they provide answers – answers to often complex and time-consuming challenges, but in a way that is obvious, universal and enduring,” Diederik Fokkema says.

“My personal goal is to break down even the broadest equations related to work communities, office spaces and public spaces in a way that is clear to the user – to create even simple entities. I am passionate about the opportunities presented by technology and new applications, automation and smart systems it enables. Buildings could be so much more energy efficient and comprehensible to their users than before! In our design work we have access to enormous amounts of information and powerful software for modelling, 3D printing and simulations. Ultimately, however, the most important aspect of design work is what a person encounters in his or her environment.”

Technology and systems can be concealed – what is most important is the user experience.

“Products and spaces should create an experience, they should touch us. When designing furniture, ergonomics and esthetics are integrated. A chair should be excellent for sitting in and using. At the same time it has to meet the esthetic goals set for it by modern materials, production methods and the environments in which it is used. Perhaps for this very reason designing chairs has been a source of inspiration for many designers,” Diederik Fokkema suggests.



Pi Chair

THE PI CHAIR was designed especially for Piironen and represents the first chair that Diederik Fokkema has designed. The idea for the new chair came from a single small observation.

“We know the customers, we know the designers and we know the manufacturers. We have furnished thousands of square metres of workspaces, stores, conference rooms and offices – even libraries and city halls. The diversity of our field of work is inspiring, as individual solutions cannot be duplicated,” Diederik Fokkema explains.

The whole Pi Collection is a result of the ambitious and efficient teamwork between Piironen product development department and FOKlab research of Fokkema & Partners Architecten.

When Diederik Fokkema heard of a Finnish furniture manufacturer surrounded by forests and fields that makes products of the highest quality in terms of both technical execution and materials, he became interested.

“The technical quality of Piironen’s products in particular caught my attention. I became interested in the company, and the Dutch importer brought us together. My motivation for focusing on the design of chairs and furniture was based on the observations I made in my work and Piironen’s ability to transfer these ideas from designs to materials. Together with Piironen I was able to capture the essence of a chair in a new way. The Pi chair combines a respect for Nordic manufacturing and the Nordic environment with issues

that were raised in my own work regarding functionality and varying the product assortment. What I as a designer and Piironen as a manufacturer share in common is a sense of humility when working on the details and perfectionism in terms of quality.”

The Pi chair is a chair – it does not pretend to be anything else. It is a wooden chair, but its legs and seat are connected by a seamless metal frame. Technically and in terms of the materials, the details that lie in the shadows of the seat are a masterpiece of engineering expertise and enable an easily approachable, light and timeless look for the entire chair series.

“If we packaged it and put it on store shelves, the label on the package would read: “Seating comfort, light and universal. Recyclable,” Diederik Fokkema says with a smile.

Risto Piironen, CEO, Piironen, wants to emphasize the level of ambition:

“This is a remarkable product development project for us with top professional designers from the Netherlands. Besides Fokkema & Partners Architecten our long time importer Plan@Office from the Netherlands has had a strong grip in the project providing customer view. Product itself is important, but even more important is, that our company is again involved in high standard international product development and is approved as a manufacturer. All Pi Collection products are made here in Salo Finland, so our company has learned a lot about new materials and about the production technology.”

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Risto Piironen, CEO, Piironen

**/Simplicity
is complexity
resolved**

**/Nordic identity
and materials**

**/Unseen seating
comfort**

/Variations

Diederik Fokkema shares his thoughts about the nature of Pi Collection:

/Simplicity is complexity resolved

No two users are the same. There are big users and small users. Those who are in a hurry and those who are not. But everyone wants to sit comfortably. Alone or together. This is exactly what the work of a furniture designer involves. Complex functional challenges, personal wishes and preferences, and manufacturing and environmental considerations are all taken together – in the same process and product. Yet it cannot look complex or require the user to learn how to use it. The end result is just a chair, one that works.

/Nordic identity and materials

The light. Not being in a hurry. And nature that is unavoidable. You cannot visit Finland, travel around or meet people there without experiencing nature. I like this. Our work in the field of architecture involves working in an urban environment and trimming its complex puzzle into a more human-oriented, positive milieu. But whenever our office goes on an excursion, we head out of the city and into the nature. Experiencing nature is important for designers.

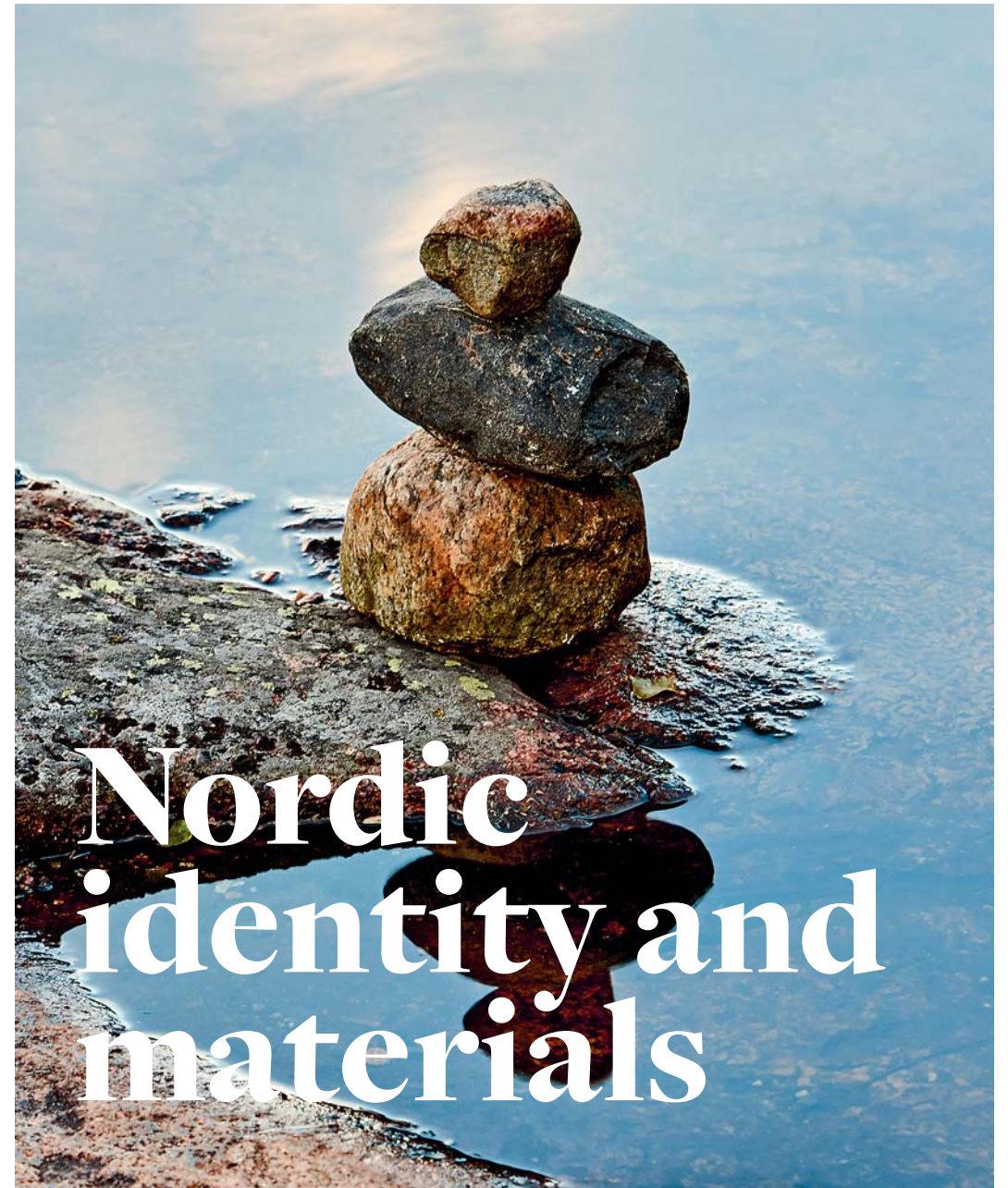
My journey from Helsinki to the Piironen factory in Salo and back – and stopping in the forest or by the sea – reminds me of timelessness and the power of nature. Wood is one of the oldest and most often used materials for chairs. Even though innovative plastics have offered a completely new dimension for forms and colours since the 1960s, the feel of wood remains unique, timeless. The organic and authentic surface of wood always creates, even subconsciously, the impression of the forest and its shadows, scents and space.

/Unseen seating comfort

The Pi chair uses uniquely deformable veneer that flexes three-dimensionally in the press. The result can be seen by the naked eye, and it can be felt immediately when you sit in the chair. It takes you in its lap, and it also allows you to relax. Thanks to the unique veneer and flexing technology, we have been able to keep the chair light yet rigid, while the dimensions offer support for the back and sitting in just the right places.

/Variations

The Pi chair is a product with variable components and colours. The colour of the frame and the upholstery can be adapted to suit the office concept, and it can also be updated for new situations. The wood materials and veneer colours can be used to create several alternatives for complementing the interior in the desired way. In this sense the Pi chair does not have a colour or visual code – this can be designed by the architect of the space in question. The sound of the chair can be played in several different ways, and I look forward to new projects in which Piironen's new chair is one of the notes in the song.

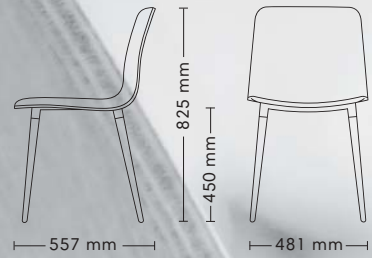


Unseen seating comfort

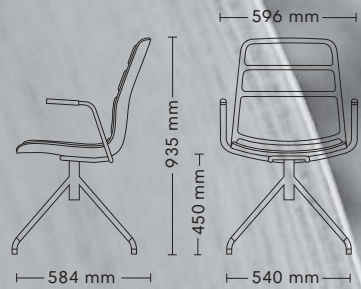


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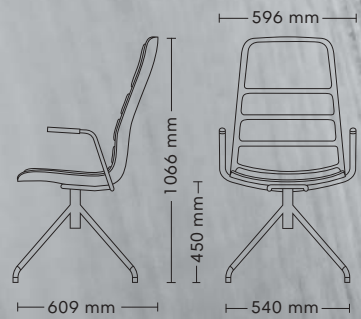
Diederik Fokkema



A.1



B.6



C.6

Variations



A.1



A.2



A.3



A.4



A.5



A.6



A.9



A.12



B.3



B.6



C.3



C.6



E.1



E.2



F.1



F.2



G.1



M.1



M.2



M.3

The whole wide range of Pi collection will include stools, bar stools, chairs, armchairs, sofas and tables for dining, conference and lounge areas.

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Photos: Timo Junttila | Text: Pekka Toivanen / Muotohomo | Graphic design: Dog Design



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Pi Chair A.1 model received the distinction "Red Dot Design Award". In collaboration with Piironen, FOKlab has created Pi chair with an outstanding design that the expert committee for the Red Dot Award: Product Design 2017 has recognized with the internationally sought-after seal of quality.