



DE LA ESPADA

'Let's Pretend This Never Happened'

Stockholm Design Week 2018

DE LA ESPADA

The objects in our lives have meaning.

Their touch, their origin, the memories
created around them.

The objects' nascent stories – materials, craft,
detailing, heritage – gain layers of complexity as
they integrate with our daily lives. Our conflict,
joy, togetherness, solitude, even our banal
activities imbue them with greater significance.

How can we present furniture in a way that
communicates its personal value? How can we draw
people into the story so they feel connected? How
can we bring a piece of Portugal to Stockholm?

At Stockholm Design Week, we presented fourteen
new pieces of furniture designed by Jason Miller,
Neri&Hu, Matthew Hilton, and Luca Nichetto in a
private home in Östermalm. Two actors, Fernando
Nobre and Vania Rovisco, moved through the space,
bringing each piece to life through vignettes of
daily life. Twelve scenes in two acts, created by
Lisbon-based Studio Astolfi.

THE STAGE







"Beautiful, powerful, and effective when the Portuguese furniture company De La Espada reveals emotions, actors and furniture before an audience. Many businesses focus on storytelling, but not everyone is able to create a story that is deeply touching. One who has succeeded, and in so doing takes inspiration to new artistic heights, is Portuguese family-run company De La Espada."

RUM Design

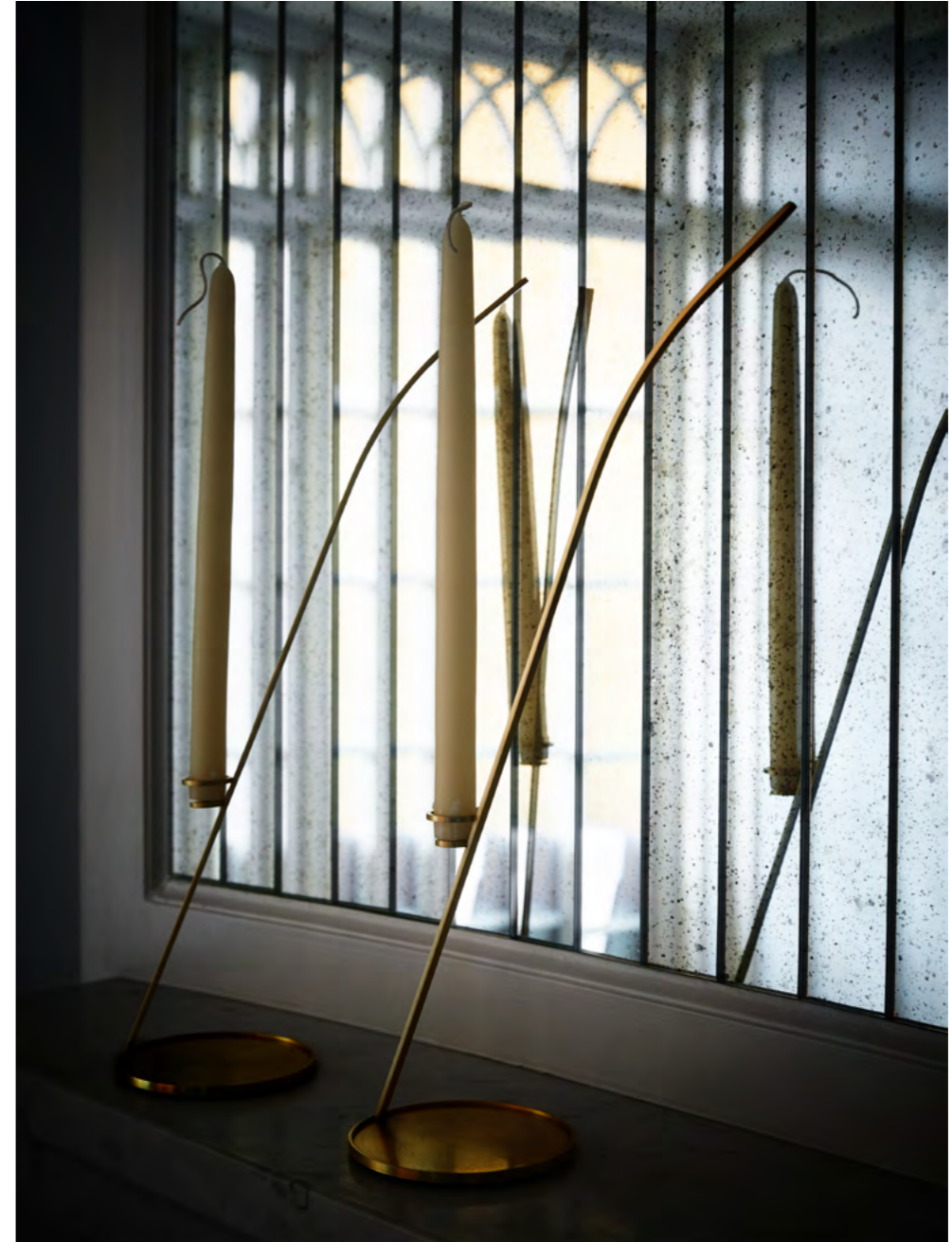






"...the presentation and performance
was without doubt the biggest talking
point of the week."

Elle Decoration Sweden















Furniture draped in white sheets
greeted guests upon arrival.

"After removing their shoes, guests wander through the apartment's many rooms, where pastel-hued walls are hung with gray canvases bearing the names, in simple typeface, of the paintings that usually hang there. Scattered throughout the spaces are the forms of many pieces of furniture, all covered with white sheets. An audio recording plays on repeat throughout, a calming voice outlining the principles of De La Espada. This is the beginning of *Let's Pretend This Never Happened*, an hour-long interactive performance that [De La Espada founder, Luis] De Oliveira sees as the antidote to the furniture fair, where any inspiration is usually outweighed by a mind-numbing, overwhelming intake of information."

Architectural Digest

THE PERFORMANCE

ACT ONE



FUSION

A human sculpture, fusing man and woman, is perched atop the Elliot Dining Table.



WHITE SHEETS

When one becomes two, the apartment fills with joy and the excitement of love. In a playful chase, white sheets are flung off each product in turn, revealing both the furniture, and the warmth of the connection between the protagonists.



"The Portuguese furniture company De La Espada presents a different way of communicating interior design, combining it harmoniously with theatre, sound and music, and launching fourteen new furniture designs in an unprecedented manner."

Elle Decor Italia





PROSCIUTTO

Guests are welcomed with a taste of Portuguese hospitality as Fernando serves prosciutto and wine from the Tavli Table.



SKYPE CALL

The familiar ring of a Skype call comes over the speakers, and the characters chat to each other through their phones, Vania curled up on Gates Sofa, and Fernando excitedly running through the home to show her each of the products through his phone screen.



KNOCK ON WOOD

Irresistible music fills the apartment, and as Fernando sings, guests find themselves smiling, dancing, stroking Elliot Dining Table's wood grain to the rhythm.





TYPEWRITER

The tone quietens, and we are now observers to our protagonists feverishly typing away at Solo Desk, their thoughts voiced in the space above. They search for the right words to define De La Espada, and once satisfied, walk off together hand in hand.



"Amazing performance and beautiful pieces from a warm-hearted brand. We absolutely loved it."

Anne-Marie Buemann, OEO Studio



ACT TWO

LOVE BOAT / MUSICAL CHAIRS

The celebration returns in Act Two, with Fernando belting out Love Boat. Clothed in a bathrobe and boating cap, his performance recalls the unselfconscious joy of singing in the shower.

Guests are invited to join Vania and Fernando in a game of musical chairs. A bit apprehensive at first, each is soon laughing, running and pushing in a bid to grab that final seat on Solo Dining Chair.



SOFA SCENE

Piling up on the Planalto Sofa like friends and family, guests watch film clips involving sofas and guess the titles.



MIRRORED MEAL

Vania and Fernando have a silent argument over dinner at the Elliot Dining Table. The isolation each feels is palpable. Vania exits to the bedroom as Fernando pours himself a glass of bourbon at the Classon Sideboard.



THIS IS A MAN'S WORLD

Fernando sings a lament, a cry of loneliness
and fear of losing his loved one.



BED SCENE

In bed, neither character is able to sleep. Internally, anger and isolation struggle with love and a need for connection. The lovers twist and turn in the Solo Bed, pushing away from one another, then toward, then away again.





CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

A connection is found through play: the pair take turns looking through the lens of a View-Master toy.

Fernando brings out a leather suitcase full of personal items, each special to someone involved in the production. Guests are invited to select an item and place it inside the Solo Vitrine, together creating a cabinet of curiosities.





"New furniture and a very emotional art performance by De La Espada. The most interesting, poetic and touching I've experienced in connection with a furniture launch!"

Charlotte Ravnholt, Bo Bedre



"The experience, by its conclusion, had a near-magical effect: Even the most uptight, jaded journalists and style-setters... were, by the show's end, completely entranced, eager to grasp hands with strangers and dance to blasting music or stroke the grain of a table as instructed by the performance's charismatic actor and de facto master of ceremonies."

Architectural Digest





"Once intimate and interactive, the emotional presentation felt like witnessing someone else's private life. Or being a part of it. What makes it unique is that the performance brings the furniture to life, instead of taking it out of context as in usual presentations. It brings us to the very heart of the home, where furniture is ultimately used. It also makes one think of the intimacy of the spaces we inhabit, and the special moments that happen in our everyday lives."

Trend Tablet

"Absolutely transporting performance by Portuguese dancers/actors. All the while demonstrating #delaespada #delaespadafurniture An emotional hour spanning from teary eyed to laughter. Thank you for this brilliant show(room)."

Kristina Backlund

"It began with the two actors in a wild dance with the light feet of love, who flew through the rooms and uncovered both their feelings and the furniture. The audience was in the middle of the drama and followed these scenes from a marriage. The collection from De La Espada weaved into the couple's life story of love, sadness and lack, but also into a scene about the magic of memory where life's props - our furniture - play important roles."

SVD Magasinet

CREDITS

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Pages 36-77 by Yves Callewaert

Film Stills

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