



STRATUM: MULTIFUNCTIONAL FURNITURE INSPIRED BY GEOLOGICAL LAYERING

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Rotterdam-based design studio The New Raw, run by architects Panos Sakkas and Foteini Setaki, presents an oversized lobby furniture piece, Stratum. Inspired by geological stratification, the sculptural 18 meter-long multifunctional element enlivens the entrance area of the new office building of a pioneering online food shopping company in Utrecht, the Netherlands.



The largest monolithic piece designed by the creative duo to date makes the whole space vibrate: turning, curving, folding, and unfolding in a variety of heights and widths, it serves for sitting, reception, planters, as a high working desk and as a leaning table.

Transforming 880 kg of plastic waste into a new type of "stone", the project simulates rock

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formations through a sophisticated layer-to-layer 3D sculpture technique. Just as natural layers of fossil sediment are compacted and lithified over time, in Stratum, a new layer is deposited on top of the previous one until it hardens into its final massive conformation. Some strata are deformed into curves through movement while the sediments are still soft.



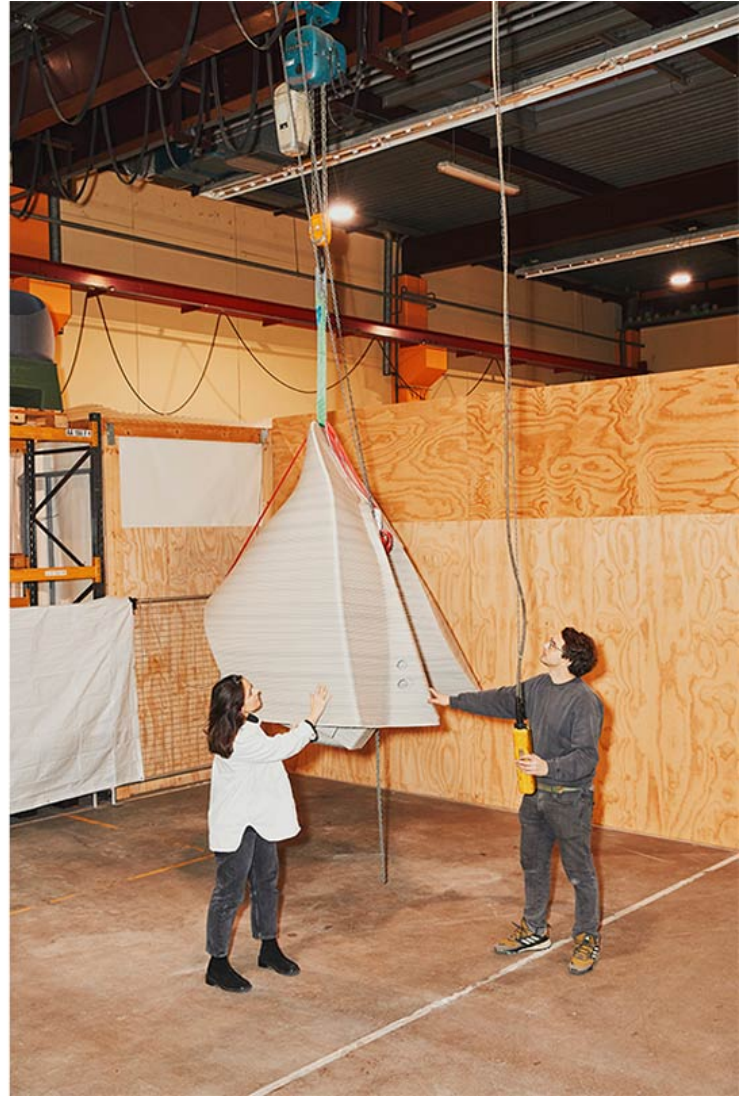
Enhancing the metaphor of the geological process, the rounded silhouette is the product of a tentative trial-and-error esthetic that combines design, robotics and craftsmanship, deliberately bringing artisanal flair to the piece. Brushes of grey on an off-white background are added in

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randomly planned intervals and in constantly different orientations. The resulting color is inspired by supermarket stacking crates – a subtle reference to the client – while its texture reinforces the earthy character of the furniture.



In addition to its solid shape, the piece triggers tactile exploration with its sinuous lines: "Playing and interacting with Stratum stimulates the senses and creates engagement with others. Materiality is an important factor in our research as it plays an important role in our mental, visual, and physical perception of a space. In this case, Stratum enhances the character and the functionalities of an

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ordinary entrance hall and, at the same time, instils a sense of familiarity, putting visitors at ease," explain Panos Sakkas and Foteini Setaki, co-founders of the studio.



Maximizing functions and adapting to multiple situations, Stratum is a custom-designed piece that can serve office settings, receptions, waiting rooms, or even recreational spaces like bars, cafés and restaurants, choreographing an interior landscape that calls for intuitive exploration.

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