

**NUMBER 239**

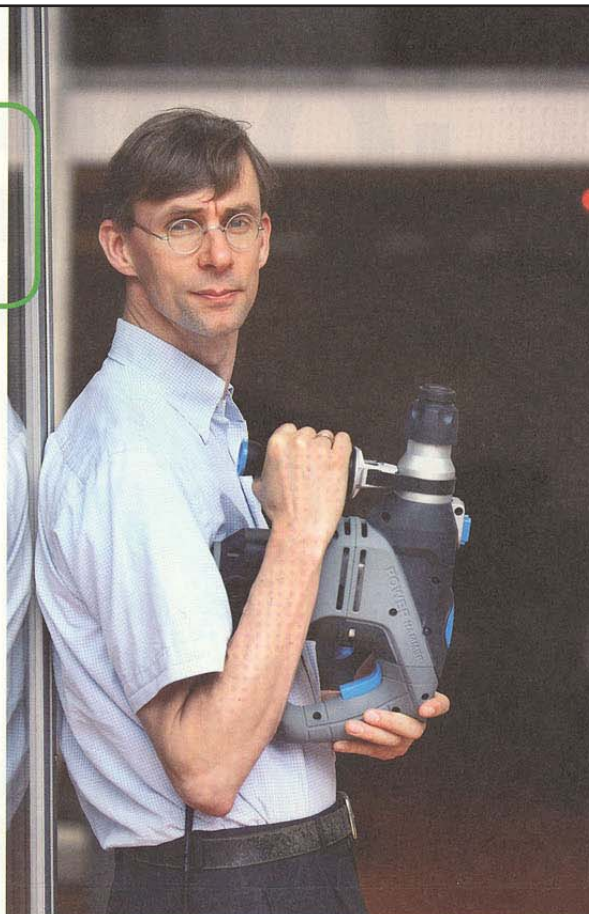
**Michiel Meurs (48)**

studied at IDE from 1978-1984.

He started working for Isthia industrial design before founding his own office in 1988 with Michiel Brandes. His founding-partner left the office in 1995 to continue

a career as a composer and musician.

In May 2008, Meurs published a retrospect called 'Form Follows Vision': twenty years of Brandes en Meurs designs and a peek into the future of design.



Another example is our design of a new mailbox for PTT (Dutch Post, currently TNT). After we had won a competition, it turned out that a division of PTT had just ordered a new mold for the existing Friso Kramer design."

**What did you like or dislike about IDE when you studied in Delft?**

„I was very much inspired by the combination of theory and practice and I liked making prototypes with fellow students. Studying at IDE, you didn't need a student fraternity to meet people. On the other hand, I believe there was too much focus on mathematics and physics. I wanted to learn more about the basics of a good design. I decided to go studying in Canada for a year, at Carleton University. I made more designs in one year than I did in five years at IDE."

**Do you notice any changes compared to your time at IDE?**

„A big change is that design has become more and more popular. You can see that in the number of students and in the newspapers. When I started my studies, my father collected every article about design. He had to use his scissors only about seven times a year! Another change concerns the attitude of students. When I taught at IDE for a year in the late eighties I noticed a change in attitude. When I studied at IDE, we had a seventies spirit of trying to make a better world by improving everyday design. I then saw first year students, with no design experience, adopting the image of a star designer. They talked about design in a certain way and even stuck the right brand of pencils in their pockets to suit the image."

**Could you name some of the Brandes en Meurs designs that we encounter in daily life?**

„We have designed a lot of tools, such as the pistol grip Skil screwdriver. It received the Dutch design prize 2006. We are currently designing a series of tools for a competing brand: Ferm. Designs for public transport constitute another big part of our portfolio, for example the purple chairs in Dutch double-deck trains. Since 2001 we have been developing such projects in a partnership called From AtoB. We've developed the concepts for the Zuid-tangent and the Interliner buses and the bus stops in Tilburg."

**When I think of this train interior I think of the orange bins that are too narrow, hard to open...**

„...and easily unload on the floor. It's true. However, they're not our design. We only designed the chairs. I think the best part of the chair is the ashtray: casted aluminium fitting smoothly into the armrest. Smoking is not allowed nowadays, but the ashtrays are still the jewelry of these chairs."

**What was your graduation project?**

„A garden chair, made of SMC, a synthetic material. The chair could be adjusted

in a special, patented way, giving it a wide range of positions: from upright to a flat stretcher. The company made a prototype and was about to start production when they received a big commission from Renault. Instead of manufacturing my chair, they decided to make bumpers and panels."

**Frustrating?**

„It's part of the business. Our retrospect shows other examples. One of our first commissions was a register device for road pricing, placed in the interior of the car. Today, nineteen years later, road pricing still hasn't been implemented.

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Purple chairs in Dutch double-deck trains.



The pistol grip Skil screwdriver.