

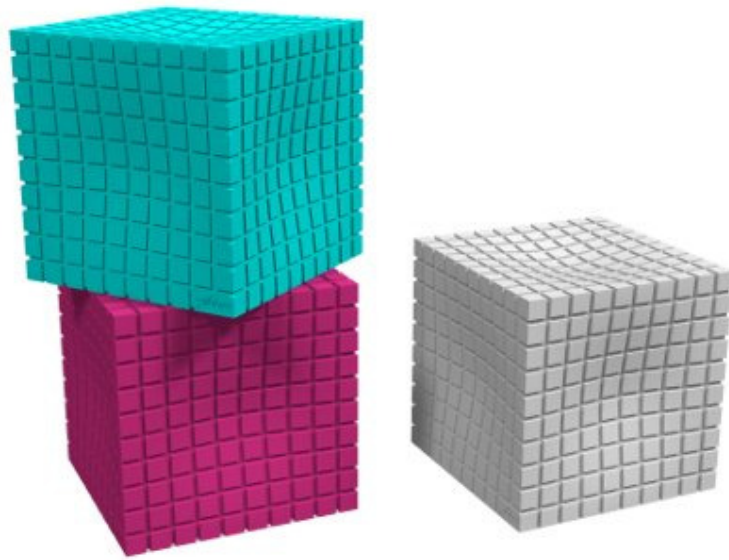
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A man completely in tune with his time, Karim Rashid continues in his quest to change the world through his unconventional contemporary design sensibility. The designer was recently in Singapore to launch Pinker, his new furniture brand for home and office, which comes in funky shades of fuchsia pink, lime green and rich purple, before it makes his way to the Milan Furniture Fair in April 2009.

Your father is Egyptian, your mother English, you were born in Egypt, grew up in England and Canada and you now live in New York City. How do you balance your different cultural influences in your work?

Well, when I lived in Toronto, I could literally reach in a matter of minutes different neighbourhoods: the Polish quarter, Chinatown, etc. But as you know, I don't dwell in the past. What shapes our culture is the contemporary world. If we remain attached to our past and some of its obsolete traditions, we won't be able to reinvent this world using the new codes and techniques that are available today. I believe that we could be living in an entirely different world – one that is full of real contemporary inspiring objects, spaces, places, worlds, spirits and experiences. This is the world that shapes my personal culture.



How is Pinker going to transform today's furniture industry?

Pinker should grow and become a powerful entity in the world. I think the design industry, and the furniture industry in particular, really needs to be progressive and needs to reshape the way we live. I think that in the age we live in, which is a digital age, the world physically needs to catch up and change with it. And I think that every object and every physical entity in our daily lives should give us some sense of pleasure and really elevate our spirit. Our intention here with Pinker is to make products that are really in a sense for anybody and everyone.

How did you come up with the name Pinker for your new brand?

I have always loved the colour pink as you know. I find it has energy, dynamism, optimism and is also a way to let people reflect on the masculine values that still dominate our world. Pink is strong. Pinker is stronger.

Pinker is a platform to create objects that are truly inspired by the digital age in which we live. So I figured out that it should be a bit more than Pink! Pinker products are first based on a vision of today's lifestyle. Working has become part of our daily life. Modern objects must recognise this duality between work and leisure. Being productive is no longer confined to the sacred ground of the corporate office. Pinker products address this and can be used both at home and in the office, both in terms of functionality and aesthetics.



What goal do you aim to achieve with Pinker?

Number one is to bring some products that really are symbiotic with the age we live in now. And we live in a fantastic age, a digital age, a technological age, so to bring products that are a reflection of that time. Number two is to really increase our pleasure in our daily lives with the objects around us. Third is to really make these products very, very accessible and available. The problem with design for many years, until recently, was that it was always elite, very removed from everyday life and unaffordable for many people, or even inaccessible, that you couldn't even find where to get certain items. So our agenda is to accomplish all that in a way.

You have designed myriad objects – from manhole covers to restaurants. Is there an object that you haven't worked on that you'd love to do so in the future?

I would like to redesign the interior of an airplane. This is a place so poorly adapted to the needs of an air journey of 12 or more hours. After a couple of hours, it feels really uncomfortable. It is not practical to work or interact with others. The objects there are adapted, well sometimes not even so much, to land use. And the overall aesthetics are so dated. The whole experience has to be reinvented.

View the latest products of Karim Rashid's new brand Pinker priced between US\$55 and US\$2,600 at www.pink-pinker.com.

Karim Rashid