

ALMA light  
Barcelona

## Coffee break with

José Manuel Mateo & Anna Salvans

(Ozestudi)



**ALMA Light: First of all, welcome the team of external designers at ALMA Light, where you have debuted with a new collection called NONET. How does being part of the ALMA Light project make you feel?**

We feel really accompanied, that's the truth. We are very grateful to be part of the ALMA Light family, which is a benchmark in the lighting sector, and very excited to see the good feedback to our first collection. Thank you very much for your trust.

**We really like the name NONET. How did you come up with it?**

The NONET collection tells us, through its materials, about the urgent need to achieve a much kinder and more sustainable future. A horizon that we must build together, both those of us who have responsibilities today, and the new generations who will assume them tomorrow and who, fortunately, are already very aware. In this sense, we wanted to pay them a well-deserved tribute and we do so with a name made up of three "little people" very close to the studio called Noa, Ona and Ivet, representing all of them.

**The most notable aspects of NONET are its design and the material of its structure, a recycled polyethylene (PE) sheet. Let's go in parts and talk about design first: how would you define NONET from a design point of view?**

Simple and honest. It is a collection where the form is the result of the analysis of its own function and the elements and materials that compose it. It is a logical and understandable set that transmits serenity.

**And as for materials, where did the idea of using a recycled material for this collection come from?**

It is true that the product could have been just as sustainable with other materials, but recycled PE allowed us greater expressiveness. And it was a very good decision, not only because it brings message, color and fun to the product, but because it meant putting one more challenge on the table: to make a beautiful object from recycled plastic made with waste. And we even went a little further with the complicity and energy of Cristian Cubiñá, who was fully involved in the development process of our idea. We experimented together until we achieved the most suitable material for the collection: a PE that is made tailored for this collection and is the result of many tests.

**Speaking more generally... How would you define the essence of your company, Ozestudi?**

For us it continues to be a place where we can dream with our eyes open and where we delve daily, in the form of projects, into extraordinary universes that allow us to continue learning new things.

Clients, who we also force to dream, imagine that they see us as a design studio with a lot of experience that is characterized by rigor and commitment; we do not close a fix until the customer is satisfied and the feature is resolved.

**How would you define Anna Salvans-'person' and José Manuel Mateo-'person' with a single phrase?, and How would you define Anna Salvans-'designer' and José Manuel Mateo-'designer' with a single phrase?**

Anna: Positive, approachable, mountain, ocean and travel lover, and always willing to join a good plan. Observant, creative, perfectionist and decisive.

José Manuel: I do not usually make this dissociation, I am just the same as a person and as a designer; I suppose I can define myself as someone very normal in all spheres of my life.

**When and how did each of you become interested in design?**

Anna: In a way it has always been in me. As a child I was very curious, it seems I was an "inventor", creative and ingenious. I liked to create things with cardboard, shoe boxes or any element that I saw potential in, for me it was very fun to be able to make something come from nothing, creating something useful with which I could interact, that served a purpose. On the other hand, I have always paid attention to how things are built, I have been curious about cause-effect; for example how certain pieces open or close, or why they are a certain shape. I have always been fascinated by discovering these types of details.

José Manuel: I am a hundred percent sure it was in 1993, when asking myself questions about the artificial world that surrounded me and which led me to discover that there was a professional field dedicated to that task: industrial design. Since then I wanted to dedicate myself to it, and that's what I'm doing.

**What requirements in terms of personality, training and skills do you consider necessary to be a good industrial designer? Give us a joint answer...**

Being curious is essential and knowing how to ask questions is even more so. A formal training is always the best – and most recommended – base from which to start. From there on, it will be passion that will surely define the work and its journey.

**Where do each of you get inspiration for your ideas?**

Anna: From nature, its shapes and colors, and from my attitude of analysis and constant observation of everything that surrounds me.

José Manuel: I do not usually feel that I have inspiration, rather I believe that a solution is a connection between ideas and conditions, and that if you are in the process of solving it, you solve it through the design process. Otherwise, how could you get solution after solution, project after project?

**What is the strangest place where inspiration has suddenly struck you?**

Anna: It's a classic, but dreaming. Several times I have woken up with the solution to the problem I had on the table...

José Manuel: Let me continue calling it "connections". I have reached them in the most unexpected places and performing the most banal actions, such as opening a car door, climbing a staircase or cooking, probably because my head is always full of projects.

**Tell us about your 'favorites': a material, a color, a shape...**

Anna: I am passionate about color, but as a concept; I have no favorites. The coherent and harmonious forms, which resolve the need without anything superfluous. Noble materials such as wood and stone, and also new recycled materials as a

resource to be taken into consideration.

José Manuel: It may sound boring, but I have no predilection, for me everything fits and everything is valid. I think that each project and the way in which it needs to be resolved ends up defining all these aspects on its own and in a concrete way.

**When opening a book, a magazine, a catalogue, or seeing a shop window or a lighting fair... what can't you stand to see in a design?**

Anna: Without a doubt, the "designs" that hide behind a beautiful shape, as a justification that anything goes. They really have no reason to be, they are useless, zero functional.

José Manuel: A lie. And unfortunately they abound in design.

**According to you, in general, the design should serve to...**

The literal part of our mission could be said to be "to solve needs", usually practical, with the purpose of making people's lives more comfortable and easier. From here, design also emerges as a solver of spiritual and/or emotional problems and is a social, industrial and economic agent. It serves much more purpose than we might think.

**An artist you admire...**

Anna: It may be controversial to say this, because of course there are many topics to quote, but I really always shy away from the big names because I think there are so many anonymous people who have done great things! The spreading achieved today with social networks makes you discover every day the infinite number of talented people that exist and with whom books could be filled.

José Manuel: I have to admit that, intellectually speaking, I tend to empathize more with designers than with artists. In this sense, I greatly admire all those who dedicated their lives to thinking more than to designing, because they left us a valuable legacy of reflections, ideas and theories on which many others can continue to build thought in favor of the discipline, such as G. Bonsiepe, B. Munari or T. Maldonado, to name just three.

**What advice would you give to a young person who wants to study industrial design?**

If you have passion, you just have to be patient.

**Thank you very much for having responded to this interview, we wish you the greatest success.**

**Thank you all!**

