

## INTERVIEW WITH THE DESIGNER

Josep Novell



How would you define Josep Novell with a single sentence?

Someone with a certain ability to see how things can be, rather than how they really are.

When and how did you become interested in design?

At the age of 18, when I read an article in an American magazine (Spanish edition) and also when I saw the permanent exhibition of the then recently created BCD ('Barcelona-Center-of-Design Foundation for the Promotion of Industrial Design') inside an inflatable building at the Diagonal Avenue of Barcelona. I fell in love with the profession.

Your work tools are...

Head, paper and pencil.

What requirements, in terms of personality, training and skills, do you consider necessary to be a good industrial designer?

Perhaps the ability to question and make new interpretations of the uses and forms of the objects that help us to live.

**How would you define, in just three words, your work?**

Honest, simple, balanced.

**Where do you get inspiration, in general, for your ideas? What is the strangest place where inspiration has come to you? Who inspires you?**

There is no inspiration, there is work. The accumulation of experiences helps as well.

**In the ALMALight catalog of luminaires there are several of your designs, made in collaboration with Ernest Perera and Josep Puig: Blow, Cuadrat, Flat, Moon & Supermoon, Paros Alabaster, Square, Stone, Sun and Tiny. Is there a common denominator in all these collections? What would? And... which one are you especially proud of?**

The only common denominator I can find in this honesty, simplicity and balance in the results.

**Throughout your career, your designs have received various awards and recognitions, such as the 2020 Delta-ADI-FAD Award for the Paros Alabaster collection, produced by ALMALight. What does that award represent to you?**

It is an award in which the jury is made up of professionals belonging to the sector, it is a wish to say: "go on, you're doing well"; and that is very good.

**When designing Paros Alabaster, how did you start the creative process? What was your source of inspiration?**

There is no inspiration. There is observation of the material, possibilities of formalization, lighting needs, creation of the collection, attempts to make a new contribution to the sector, etc.

**How did you come to think about the use of alabaster?**

The curiosity to work a material with which I had not worked before, knowing that it is one of the oldest materials used in lighting.

**What do you see, what do you feel when you hold a Paros Alabaster in your hands?**

This mix of current and past.

**Speaking more in general... is there a specific value that you want to highlight in your designs?**

As I previously mentioned, this mixture of tranquility, simplicity...

**Do you take into account aspects related to the future industrial production of your creations? Or do you leave that part entirely in the hands of the industrialist who will then produce your designs?**

I always keep it in mind, I think it is part of the designer's work. I don't believe in the artist designer.

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

There cannot be a favorite, it is all related, the material, the form, the function, the color, the emotion...

**When you open a book, a magazine, a catalog, or when you see a shop window or a lighting fair... what can't you stand to see in a design?**

That it is stupid.

**What part of your job makes you the happiest?**

That a design responds well to what you have been thinking about.

**What has been the best moment of your working life?**

An award, a satisfied customer, a good product...



**Do you have any unspeakable mania when it comes to designing?**

No. Neither confessable nor unspeakable.

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

...make the world happy.

**When you don't 'design' what do you do?**

Redesign... and I also teach.

**A place to disconnect...**

Many: a conversation, music, friends, closing your eyes... although it is false, because everything becomes accumulative experience, to later perform better.

**An artist you admire...**

Many, although a sculptor that excites me is Eduardo Chillida.

**A museum you never get tired of going to...**

The museum of my memories.

**A material with which you don't get tired of working...**

My head.

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

That like me, they fall in love with the profession.

**Are there any questions you would ask to yourself, that we haven't asked in this interview?**

'If you started over, would you do the same thing?' I would.

