curve

curvelive.com | issue thirty-seven | 2011

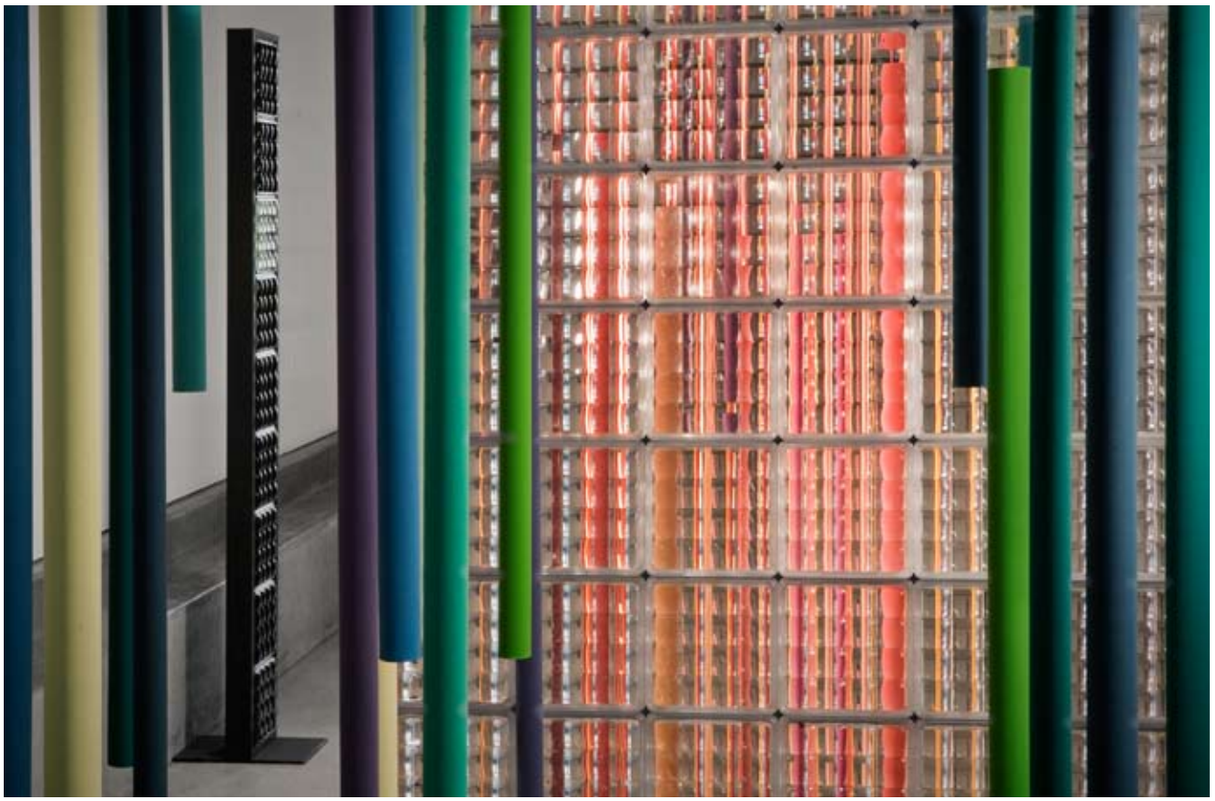
Reflecting images
made in glass

Improving lives
with the IDEAs

Future mobility
walking aid wins

form product package

ISSN 1446-4829



profile

Glass houses

The set of 16 lenses work like little projectors transmitting any light and images into a space, or reflecting fractals of light onto a surface or wall

above, top
PICT wall reflecting coloured rods behind it

opposite page
Frédéric Remaud (left) and Frédéric Gervais

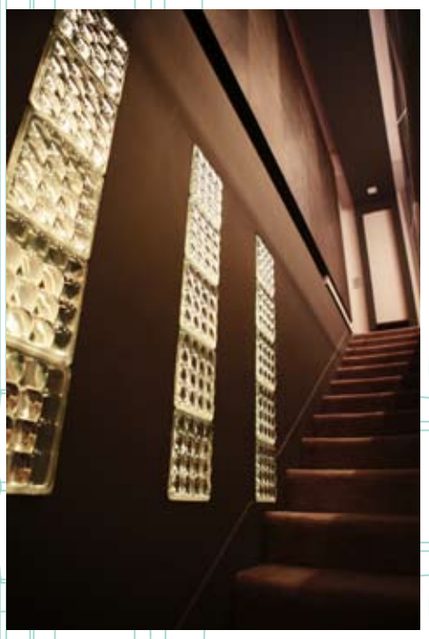
Based in Lille in France, Fred&Fred® have used their collective research and creative thinking, combined with their passion for light, to create a state-of-the-art glass building product. The unique partnership between these two art and design professionals – Frédéric Gervais, a photographer and art director, and Frédéric Remaud, industrial designer – merges Gervais's research into image production using multi-lens cameras and changing images and Remaud's expertise in furniture design. The result is the creation of the PICT®. Not your average glass building block, a single PICT contains a little bit of genius. *Curve* editor **Belinda Stening** spoke to Frédéric Remaud, co-founder and president of the Fred&Fred partnership.

"We met in a provincial and very innovative art school in France, where we learnt all the basics of art, design, architecture, fashion, visual communication and art history," explains Remaud.

The two continued their studies, respectively, at the two prestigious art and design schools in Paris – Gervais, at the Estienne School, then at the Beaux-Arts in Paris in the Photography department; Remaud studied at the Olivier de Serres school, the Paris-Val-de-Marne School of Architecture and finally at the Institute for Architecture La Cambre of Brussels.

"After a visit to an architecture exhibition at the Parc de la Villette in Paris in 2004, we decided to join forces to create what became the PICT," says Remaud.

A PICT consists of three parts – two slabs of 20-millimetre thick optical glass and a cleverly injection moulded plastic frame that assembles and supports the slabs, and positions them in parallel to each other, with great accuracy. "It is the engineering of the lens surface that creates images," says Remaud.

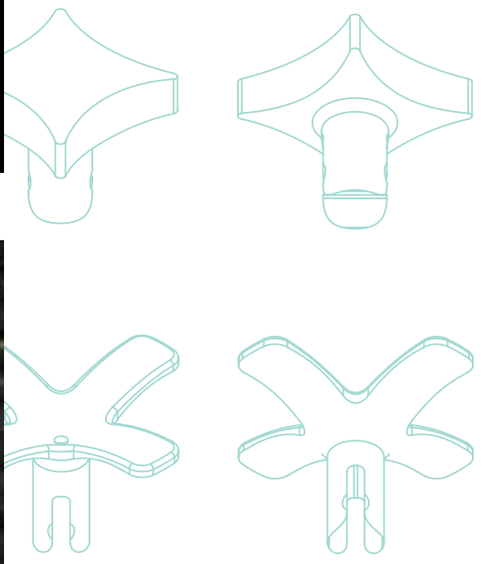


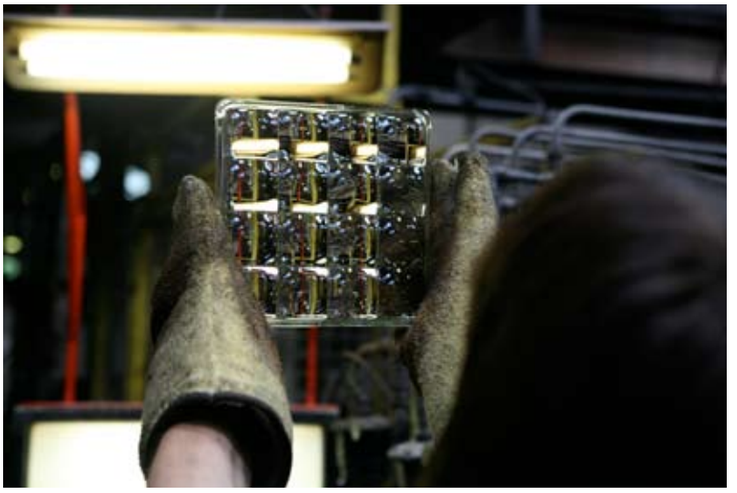
above
stand alone PICT walls in transparent and red

left
inverted reflections in a PICT

background
PICT detail drawings showing joining method

opposite page
moulding a PICT in the factory North of Lille; inspecting a PICT after moulding





This is not as simple as it sounds. Each PICT contains a network of 16 optical glass lenses that reflect light and images. When a wall of PICT blocks is constructed, multiple images can be seen. This automatically creates a beautiful, moving and colourful pixelated effect.

The set of 16 lenses work like little projectors transmitting any light and images into a space, or reflecting fractals of light onto a surface or wall. Like any piece of glass or lens, the PICT automatically transmits any movement or colour onto each lens in an inverted image format.

The lenses concentrate any available light onto the surface of the optical glass lenses. This provides optimal diffusion of any light available in the immediate surroundings. The concentration of light from the multiple lenses intensifies the total overall light that is emitted from a PICT – giving the impression that the PICT is somehow illuminated.

Following a program of eco-research, the modules are made of recyclable materials. In addition, no electrical energy is required to create or intensify the light projected by the PICT. Multiple images are created instantaneously, while the position and design of the lenses in a PICT means that any light that hits the lenses is diffused in parallel to the ground.

The PICT is manufactured in the North of France in Lille. Each PICT measures 22 x 22 x 8 centimetres and weighs 3.5 kilograms. There are four PICT styles. The transparent version comes with a transparent flange. A version with frosted glass on one side is designed for use where privacy is needed (bathrooms and toilets).

A ruby red coloured PICT is coloured using internal enamelling, and comes with a red coloured transparent flange. The China PICT, also coloured by enamelling, is lighter, at 1.8 kilograms, and features a mirror effect.

With the use of plastic injection moulding technology, the PICT modules are assembled together within one-tenth of a millimetre, using a patented LOCK® system. This system allows the modules to be mounted without the use of adhesive. This also means that a PICT wall is easily demountable and reinstalled as and when desired.

When constructed, an assembly of PICTs is separated by stainless-steel supports. A PICT wall is built inside an aluminium framework and the frame is finished in the required colour. Once again, no glue is needed for the frame construction. A selection of cross-pieces are used to fill the gaps left at the intersection of each square PICT in a construction.

"PICT is installed in Balenciaga's retail stores in China, to separate the entrance of the store from the main shop interior. This preserves the intimacy of the store interior and projects light into the retail space," said Remaud. "PICT has also been used to separate the toilet of a restaurant in the Carrousel in the Louvre in Paris."

A building block, sensitive to human movement and the ever-changing variations of light, Fred&Fred's PICT seems set to bring a vibrant new atmosphere to architectural spaces. ■