OUTSIDE **THE BOX**
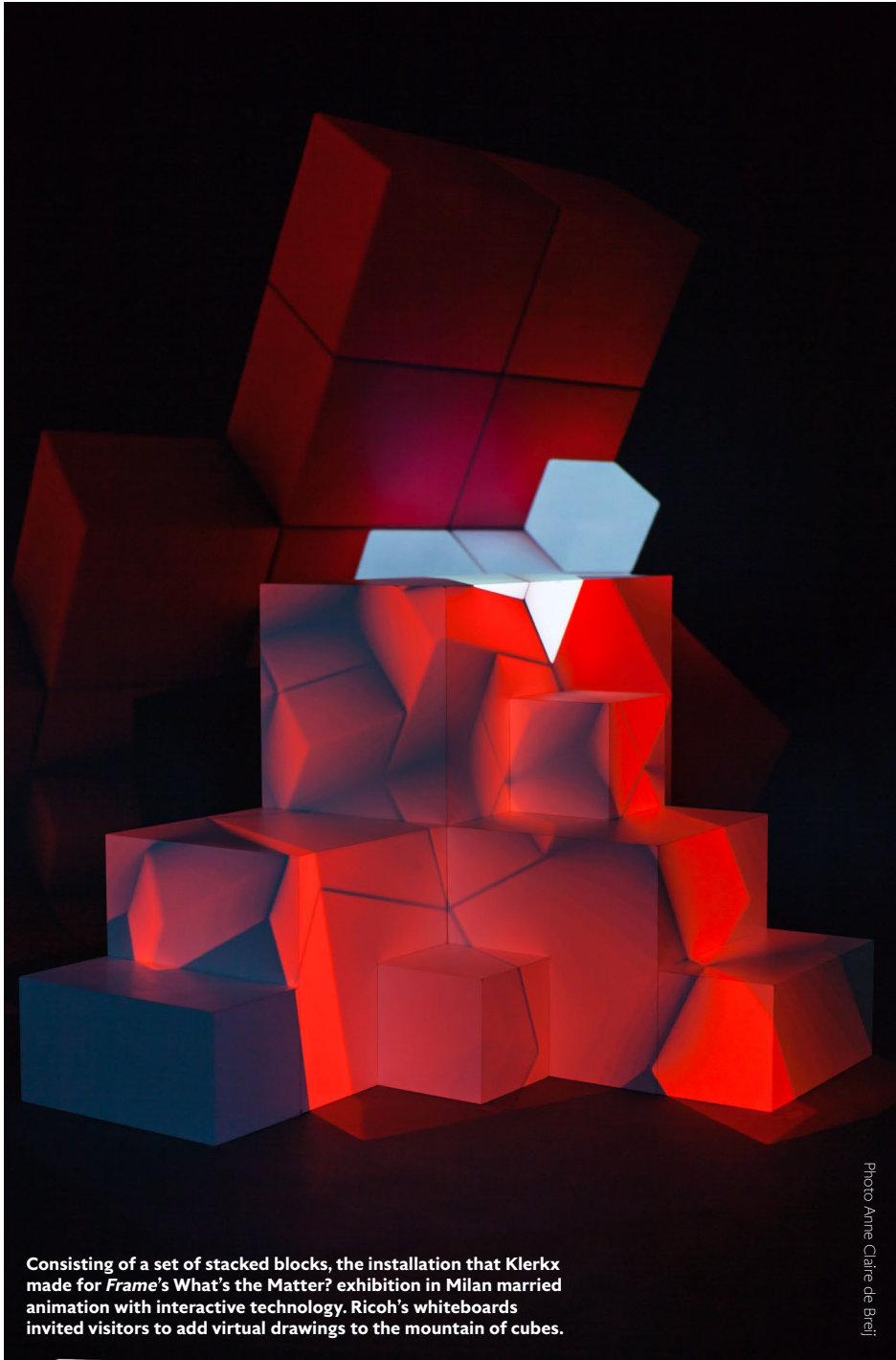
Video designer Arjen Klerkx proves that projectors aren't just for PowerPoint.

Words **Jane Szita**   Portrait and styling **Anne Claire de Breij**

COMBINING THEATRE, technology and design, Arjen Klerkx's visually stunning sets — designed for everything from productions of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen* to stand-up comedy shows — achieve dynamically layered effects through the use of projectors. It seemed only natural, therefore, for Klerkx to design Ricoh's installation at *Frame*'s What's the Matter? exhibition in Milan. We sat down with Klerkx to discuss the artistic potential of the projector.

Have theatre and projectors always gone hand in hand for you? ARJEN KLERKX: Theatre came first. I studied theatrical make-up, changing later to set design and technology. Although projectors were still largely analogue back then, they always appealed to me. When I went to work at the RO Theater in Rotterdam, director Guy Cassiers encouraged me to experiment with them — and I've been doing that ever since.

Do you see yourself more as a designer of digital technology or of physical spaces? I specialize in projection and content design for 3D spaces. I'm absolutely not a screen designer — it's all about the total environment. I layer projected images to make collages that tell stories and create atmospheres in the real world.

Where do you find the images you use? They're all photos that I've taken myself. I don't just use still shots, though. I also work with video and digital art.

How did you start working with Ricoh? They saw the show I did for Dutch comedian Jochem Myjer and recognized the potential of their projectors — and of my ability to unleash it.

Tell me about the piece you made for Ricoh in Milan. The starting point was the space itself and *Frame*'s 'phygital' theme. My piece had to be immersive, so I made it part of the architecture. The chequered floor tiles suggested the idea of using blocks. I prefer to project on 3D objects anyway. I made an animation that brings the cubes to life, »

Photo Anne Claire de Breij

Consisting of a set of stacked blocks, the installation that Klerkx made for *Frame*'s What's the Matter? exhibition in Milan married animation with interactive technology. Ricoh's whiteboards invited visitors to add virtual drawings to the mountain of cubes.

HAIR AND MAKE-UP Aga Urbanowicz (Angelique Hoorn Management) CLOTHING AND ACCESSORIES Sneakers by Marc Jacobs, jeans by Paul Smith and sweater from MSGM, all courtesy of Magriet Nannings

'Ricoh recognized the potential of their projectors — and of my ability to unleash it', says Dutch artist Arjen Klerkx who was tapped by the brand for their installation at *Frame*'s What's the Matter? exhibition.

shifting their surfaces and morphing their material from stone to wax.

What equipment did you use? I used a 6K Ricoh projector with a special short-throw lens. For the stretches between animations, when people could interact with the installation, I used two Ricoh whiteboards. These allowed visitors to engage with each other by simultaneously drawing sketches, which appeared on the blocks.

What are you working on now? An experiment using Ricoh short-throw projectors in a staggered sequence to create a sense of depth and a sort of tunnel perspective. Their small size and the short distance involved make them ideal for the task.

What are your top three tips for designers who work with projectors? First, don't let the equipment get in your way. That's why I'm so happy with Ricoh's Ultra Short Throw projectors — you can put them really close to the wall, so that no one gets in the way of the projection. Second, don't be afraid to experiment with the equipment and use it in different ways. Finally, don't be too literal. If you want to suggest a forest, don't use pictures of a forest; use effects that project the *feeling* of a forest. You have to leave room for the viewer's imagination.
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Use Ricoh's Clickable Paper to revisit Arjen Klerkx's installation in Milan. Simply download Clickable Paper from iTunes or GooglePlay, point your smartphone or tablet at this page, snap it using the app, and enjoy the show!

Ricoh partnered up with *Frame* for the What's the Matter? exhibition in Milan, which ushered Salone del Mobile visitors through a phyigital world.

Photos: Alberto Ferrero

The award-winning 22-inch interactive D2200 whiteboard is a small interactive display with embedded camera and speakers for remote collaboration

The user experience is central to Ricoh's Communication Services systems and interactive whiteboards, which are designed to be intuitively easy to use.

Ricoh's Ultra Short Throw projectors highlighted the relationship between the physical and digital at *Frame*'s debut exhibition in Milan.

Innovation at Work

Ricoh's projectors and whiteboards are part of the firm's Communications Services portfolio, which reflects the multinational's tagline: 'imagine.change'.

Building on a long history of innovation, Ricoh entered the audiovisual market a few years back with a vision of 'how unified communication technologies can enhance the workforce of today and tomorrow'. Speaking is Ricoh Europe's Oscar Mellegers. Today, he says, the brand's award-winning Communication Services portfolio is designed 'to make full use of people's collective imagination. We believe in technologies that empower everyone to visualize, communicate and collaborate on ideas'.

The user experience is central to Ricoh's Communication Services systems, which are designed to be intuitively easy to use. 'Take our interactive whiteboards, for example. They are as simple to use as a flip chart, yet they enable video conferencing, remote collaboration and digital content sharing, all at the same time,' he adds. Meanwhile, plug-and-play projection systems like those used by Arjen Klerkx 'offer endless ways of experimenting with interior design and signage'. Products like these have garnered numerous industry accolades, including the iF Design Award and the VAR Middle East Choice of Channel Awards, but as Mellegers points out, Ricoh is not content to rest on the laurels of its Communication Services portfolio. 'This summer, we're releasing a new, palm-sized projector with a laser light source,' he says. 'Content can be displayed up to 200 inches in size from a device small enough to be integrated into any environment.'

Also new, the award-winning 22-inch interactive D2200 whiteboard is a small interactive display with embedded camera and speakers for remote collaboration. 'These new technologies offer an ever-greater range of sizes in devices that provide more intelligence and durability, while becoming increasingly integrated into our surroundings,' says Mellegers.

Yet, they are only part of a story that includes an array of in-house technologies in imaging and (industrial) print, including 3D printing: 'Ricoh is in a unique position to turbo-charge the creative process,' says Mellegers. 'You can go from idea to execution in only a matter of minutes.' ●
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