

# 7.27.03 Style Designing Men

Seven on the cutting edge.

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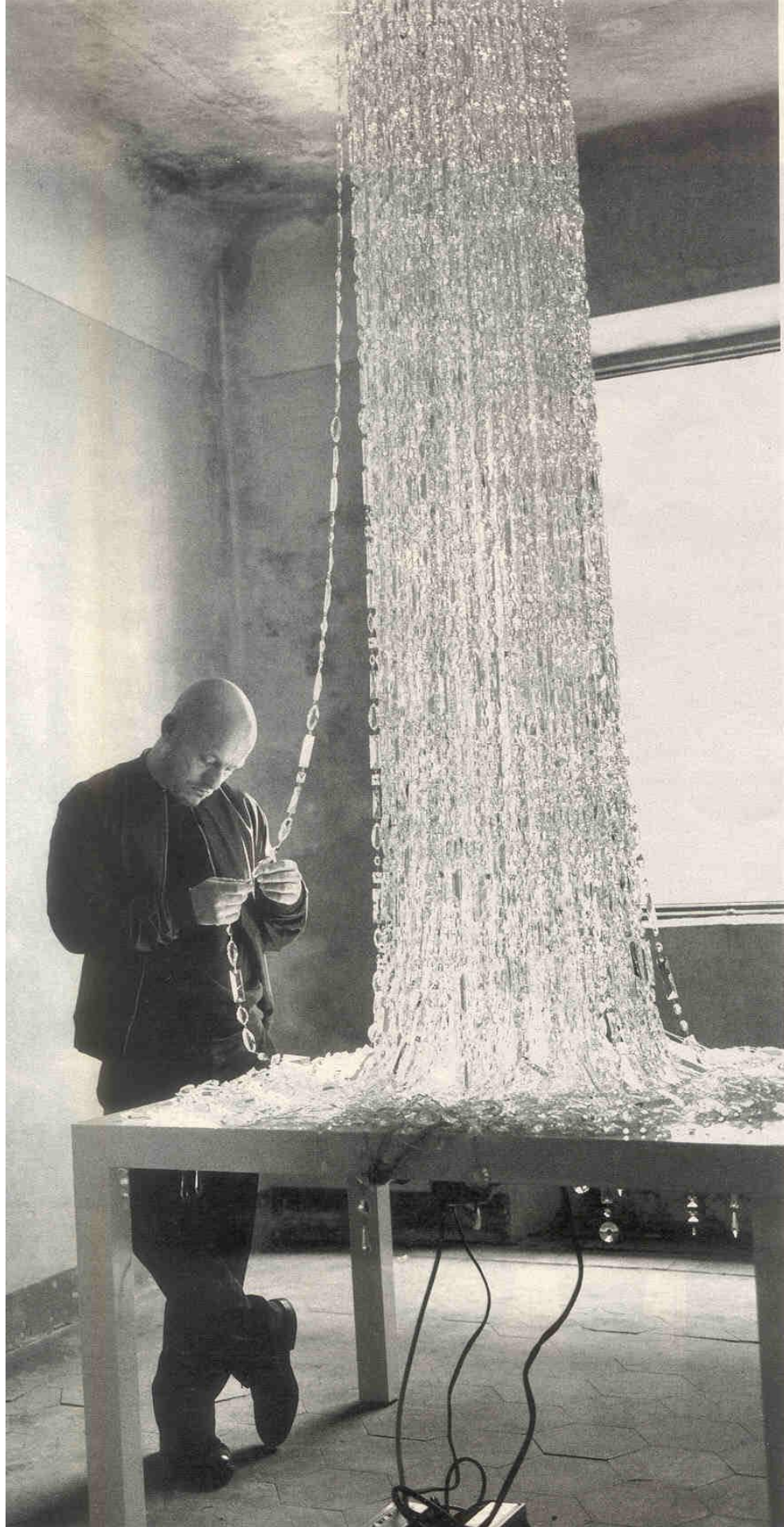
**D**esign is finally losing its cool. At this year's Milan furniture fair, the products that broke the buzz meter were either showy or whimsical or both. Crystal chandeliers — once beneath the notice of any designer worth his Helmut Lang jeans — thrilled fairgoers for the second year in a row. Damask — clearly not your grandmother's fabric anymore — covered a chair with regulation mod, molded plastic legs.

Of course, there were still plenty of low-slung sofas and steel-and-glass coffee tables around, but even the chilliest minimalists — several of them among the designers shown here — have melted a bit. Modern materials and high-tech manufacturing methods may prevail, but they can also serve human cravings for comfort, whimsy and beauty. For example, a simple wooden stool, carved by computer, couldn't be more comfortable if it had been custom made, while reflective plastic lights combine soap-bubble delicacy and Pop punch. Maybe the cutting edge is going to be softer than we think.



**Humberto and Fernando Campana's** Favela chair, for Etra, is constructed of scrap wood and named for the shanty towns in their native Brazil. The Campanas' work fuses modern design with everyday materials and social commentary. For example, above from left: the Tatoo table, made of plastic drain covers; the California Roll chair of felt, plastic and fabric; Plástico Bolha, a bubble-wrap chair; and the Jemette chair with a plastic broom-bristle back. Humberto, near right, wears a Paul Smith leather blazer, \$2,090, and shirt, \$395; Rogan jeans, \$240. All at Barneys New York. Boots: Banana Republic. On Fernando, a Paul Smith navy blazer, \$1,430. At Paul Smith, 108 Fifth Avenue. Michael Kors shirt, \$175, and pants, \$195. At Saks Fifth Avenue. Sneakers: Nike.





**Vincent Van Duysen** is a Belgian architect whose work could easily be described as minimalist -- whether it's furniture for B&B Italia, a house or a sink for Obumex (above, top to bottom). But he argues that his aesthetic is more about purity and emotion, and his Cascade chandelier for Swarovski, by spilling onto the table rather than simply hanging above it, makes the point breathtakingly. Van Duysen wears a Calvin Klein Collection gray lambskin bomber jacket, \$895, and navy wool-and-cashmere crew-neck sweater, \$225. At Calvin Klein stores. Pants: Ennio Capasa for Costume National Homme.