

2017 NeoCon Showroom

June 2017

For NeoCon 2017, Maharam presents a new installation in collaboration with the American industrial designer, Leon Ransmeier. This marks the second consecutive year of creative cooperation between Ransmeier and the Maharam Design Studio.

Each year, Maharam transforms its Chicago showroom into an open gallery space in which a minimum of product can be shown to its best advantage. Seeking a single, strong gesture, the studio looked at interaction-oriented, large-scale sculptures and public art installations before jointly arriving at a universal form: the circle.

Intending to create the largest volume possible within the space, Ransmeier developed a dramatic 9' tall by 36' wide elevated ring. Recognizing "a rare opportunity to achieve something finely detailed at an architectural scale," Ransmeier prioritized the highest expression of quality and craftsmanship possible and devised concealed, expanding mechanisms that hold the structure together without visible hardware and with only hairline joints. Fabricated in polished stainless steel, the installation is characterized by its lightness, reflectivity, and seeming indivisibility.

Spanning the width of the showroom, the freestanding structure creates an arena-like space that is simultaneously open and closed, expansive and contained. When activated by textiles, it seems solid and impenetrable from the outside. But spacing intuitively determined onsite between the 18'-long panels provides pathways into and through the installation while discouraging circumambulation. Once inside the ring, the viewer is enveloped in an omnidirectional experience, surrounded by textiles ranging from ethereal window coverings to hefty, pieced lengths of leather that are handstitched from up to eight hides. Presented as a continuous, harmonious progression of colors and surfaces, the display encompasses a wide range of materials, applications, performance characteristics, and price points while incorporating introductions and reissues from Alexander Girard, Hella Jongerius, Kvadrat, Scholten & Baijings, Paul Smith, and the Maharam Design Studio.

Two low, 6' wide circular benches provide places of rest within the ring. Built of solid white oak in accord with the Dinesen flooring, the benches have an inherently quiet presence; the material choice cloaks their mass while visually drawing them closer to the ground. Ransmeier notes another consideration: "a round bench is very different from a round table" in terms of the interaction it facilitates. While enabling conversation between adjacent persons, facing outward permits multiple groups to be at once together but separate.

For more information, contact press@maharam.com.

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About Leon Ransmeier

Leon Ransmeier (b. 1979, United States) is an American industrial designer. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, he founded his New York-based studio, Ransmeier Inc, in 2010. He's since designed furniture and interior products for clients including Arita 2016/, HAY, Herman Miller, and Mattiazzi. This is his second project with Maharam. A third—a backpack—will join a continuing series of utilitarian bags designed by Konstantin Grcic and Jasper Morrison, among others, this fall.

About Maharam

Founded in 1902, Maharam is North America's leading creator of textiles for commercial and residential interiors. Maharam textiles are included in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Museum of Modern Art, and the Stedelijk Museum, among others. Maharam is the recipient of the Cooper Hewitt, Smithsonian Design Museum Design Patron Award (2007) for its longstanding support of design and cultural initiatives.

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Leon-Ransmeier.jpg



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