

# Beauty LAND

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# Elegant designs with a natural touch

ilio, the 2 year old brand of Demirden Design, which has been a successful actor within its sector for the last 16 years, is directing global trends with the international awards it has won and the worldwide exhibitions it takes part in, while embracing functionality and aesthetics with its elegant, simple and natural products.

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**W**e arrive at the headquarters of Demirden Design, one of the leading firms in Turkish design with successful projects and international awards, in order to get to know the firm and its design team better. The offices are in Beyoğlu, in a high-ceilinged glamorous building with a distinctively Levantine architecture. Demirden Design uses the bottom floor as a gallery and the upper floor as an office. The firm was established by two siblings Mehtap and Demir Obuz – both industrial design graduates – as a small metal workshop, producing bespoke furniture. Since they started business with iron designs they decided to name the firm they founded in 1994 as Demirden (meaning ferrous). They were joined in 1996 by Sema Obuz, a graphic design graduate who spent many years working as an art director, and by architect Nil Deniz in 2004. With its core management team of four and its dynamic staff, Demirden Design is a radiant, alive and productive firm. They engage in creative and innovative projects focusing on brand building, corporate identity design, architecture, interior design, fairs, events, product design, graphic design and multimedia. With its motto of "Reaching meaningful designs as those of the nature", Demirden Design's two year old baby ilio is a tabletop, furniture and accessories brand, which follows a design philosophy completely devoted to nature. Taking inspiration from the nature and reflecting it on designs which exude functionality and aesthetics, ilio definitely succeeds in appealing to the artistic sides of those who are curious by nature and who enjoy life to the full.

### Natural, serene and simple...

We first head down to the gallery to get to know ilio better. The gallery which brings together design products and visual arts, houses a different installation in each of its rooms. Taking its name from "ilios", the Greek word for sun,

Forest by Demir Obuz



Vis-a-vis by Demir Obuz



Bouquet by Nil Deniz



Blob by Mehtap Obuz



Mehtap Obuz  
Dil Deniz  
Demir Obuz  
Sema Obuz  
(Left page; from  
the left to the  
right)





ilio symbolises the sun and its reflection on water when regarded vertically. Saluting the nature with its name, ilio aims to identify with nature through products that carry its pieces. Mehtap Obuz points that they use various materials like stoneware, glass, marble and porcelain in their designs and that they harbour a great feeling of responsibility to nature both in their choices of material and their means of production. In fact, Mehtap Obuz's "ice drop" resembles a patch of water frozen in nature, while Sema Obuz's "cube" which features 12 plates sitting on top of each other, resembles a stylised rock. The gallery has a serene and peaceful atmosphere thanks to the dominant use of white while its contents pushes us right in to the arms of nature. Consisting of six same sized glasses with a different design, Demir Obuz's "forest" stylises tree forms and creates a landscape on dinner tables. "Happycell" which introduces us to Nil Deniz's imagination and creativity, consists of whiskey, water and shot glasses, making reference to people who come together for joy and sharing.

## A brand with countless awards

Pointing that they are designing all ilio products as pieces which will become classics in the long run, Demir Obuz defines ilio as "creating modern classics". For instance, the



Ice drop by Mehtap Obuz

spiral lines of Çeşm-i bülbül, a form of glass decoration art which emerged in the Ottoman Empire towards the end of the 18th century, inspired Mehtap Obuz's vase design "lines", which celebrates the combination of the classic with the modern. ilio's ambition to stand the test of time and emerge as a classic with long lasting products differentiates it from other similar brands. "We've been very selective about ilio, making sure we design a product not because it is new but because it would bring a new meaning to life and last for a long time" says Mehtap Obuz. There are interesting stories underlying each of the ilio products. The "twig" stools by Demir Obuz feature various functions such as reclining, portability, hat hanging and balancing when stood upon, but when they are arranged in a group they resemble a reed-bed by a lake. The fact that the "twig" stool received the iF Gold award and that Demir Obuz became the first Turkish designer to have this honour proves how important a brand ilio is within the Turkish and global design scene. ilio is a brand with countless awards. Since its launch in 2008, it received 9 international awards, some of them being among the most important design awards in the world, such as iF, Red Dot, Design Management Europe, Design Defined, Design Plus and EDIDA. The fact that ilio took part in the Trend Areas of prestigious fairs like Ambiente in 2009 and 2010 with all of its collections, is a proof of its international success. Up until now ilio has taken part in important fairs like 100% Design (London 2008), Maison et Objets (Paris 2009) and Zona Tortona (Milano 2009), and the brand is quite ambitious for 2011. The Marta Herford Museum in Germany, New York's MoMA, the "Maison et Objets" fair in Paris and the Ambiente fair in Frankfurt are all preparing to introduce ilio designs to all art and design lovers in 2011.



Exist by Mehtap Obuz



### ilio is sold all over the world!

ilio's sculpture-like yet totally down to earth, real and sincere designs harbour a magical charm within. You immediately fall for them and want to own them. ilio products are available not only in Turkey but in 15 countries around the world. The Moooi Gallery in Amsterdam, Vastu in Washington, Luminaire in Miami, Takashimaya in New York, MoMA Museum Store in San Francisco, Le Bon Marché in Paris, La Rinascente in Milan and Moda Bagno in Athens are all featuring this fun and bold brand within their premises. ilio is bold, because it doesn't refrain from designing innovative products without focusing on gaining profits. It is fun, because it adds a multitude of colour to the lives of those who touch them or own them. It also makes people curious and makes them want to discover its products. "International press representatives, students, academicians and people from social design groups come and visit us and wish to get to know our team better and find out about the design trends in Turkey" says Mehtap Obuz. Of course, this success story is all down to the meticulous efforts of the team at Demirden Design. Lastly, we ask the designers how they would "describe Istanbul". Mehtap Obuz tells us that she took inspiration from the worn out marble steps of the old Istanbul apartment buildings while designing the marbled plate "landscape". Demiz Obuz, on the other hand, tells us he made reference to Istanbul's coffee shops with tiny stools and the coffee culture in general in his "vis-a-vis" chairs.

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Katkat by Mehtap Obuz



Cube by Sema Obuz

Landscape by Mehtap Obuz



Twig by Demir Obuz