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Designed for living

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DESIGNED FOR LIVING

In the wake of his two exhibitions at HKDI, Belgian design master **CHARLES KAISIN** returned to Hong Kong and talked about the launch of his new book. *SUMMER CAO reports.*

Hong Kong in early spring is often gripped by a cold, damp indolence and this year was no different. On March 1st, it was a delight to find a brightly lit warm space at the Eslite Bookstore in Causeway Bay, with two ceiling-high bookshelves flanking the space to suggest a pair of French windows, opening onto a world of knowledge. Within the space, there was an unusual glow coming from two large orange beehive-shaped seats, known as K-Benches, which created a chic and cosy atmosphere. The benches can be arranged in a variety of shapes and this pair had been organized as an “S” and a circle to seat thirty people who had come to hear Charles Kaisin, the K-Bench’s inventor.

Presented by HKDI Gallery, the event was designed to provide the Hong Kong public with an opportunity to participate in a face-to-face conversation with Kaisin, who has spent the last nine months curating the *Dress Code* and *Design in Motion* exhibitions at HKDI in association with Belgian Spirit, an initiative of the three Belgian Regions of Brussels, Flanders and Wallonia.

Belgian Spirit was set up in 2011 to promote Belgian architecture, design and fashion in Asia through the Business of Design Week (BoDW) in Hong Kong and other events. The main goal of Belgian Spirit is to create and develop long-term collaborations between Belgian designers and their Asian counterparts, and Kaisin has been a key figure in driving forward the group’s ambitions, with the *Design in Motion* exhibition dedicated to his transformative and often surreal experiments with recycled materials.

Kaisin’s aim is to change the public’s perception about recycling, an area where innovative design and quality execution have traditionally been in short supply. To mark his exhibition, Kaisin has created a book called *Design in Motion*, which is published by the Hong Kong Design Institute and the Hong Kong Institute of Vocational Education (Lee Wai Lee). The book, which features articles written by Kaisin and his peers, explores some of the key issues faced by the modern design communities. Catering to local as well as international readers, the text is written in English with

Chinese translations. The book also assembles an interesting range of images that encourage readers to adopt a more artistic perspective on life, showing that designers can do more than thinking and designing. They can actually live design – a luxury available to anyone, as long as they can think creatively and put inspiration into action. ☺

BELOW THE COVER OF CHARLES KAISIN’S BOOK *DESIGN IN MOTION*. BOTTOM FROM LEFT LESLIE LU, HKDI PRINCIPAL, QUEENIE LAU, CURATOR OF HKDI & ME (LEE WAI LEE) AND CHARLES KAISIN AT THE BOOK LAUNCH

