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Design is aesthetic, pure, perfect. It is the user who 'contaminates' an object. How much human interference can a design object tolerate? This is the question that interior architects Dorothee Maier and Andreas Utzmeier posed last June at the Designparcours, an event held in Munich. They placed Light Cube – a tall, snow-white installation that appeared to be floating – into the historical park of the National Museum of Bavaria. The site, between the walls of the museum and a pond featuring a statue of Narcissus, was not selected arbitrarily. 'The field of tension created by pond, cube and museum had great appeal for us,' says Andreas Utzmeier, who sees design as a discipline poised between self-realization and servitude. The tall, white form symbolized purity and perfection, qualities reinforced by lily-like motifs in relief on its four sides. Projected on interior walls were large images from the spheres of fashion, furniture and technology: design as we know and appreciate it. Creating contrast was a black box within the larger white structure. Visitors peering through four peepholes saw everyday images, which led them to contemplate how the flawed nature of ordinary life relates to the perfection-orientated world of design. As day drew to a close, darkness made the cube more sculptural. Interior illumination lit up individual lily petals against a darker background. A white box that during the day had given the impression of being homogeneous gained depth and complexity when viewed under different lighting conditions. For a brief time, an installation in the park became a metaphor for daily life.

Christina Sonderegger
Photography by Andreas Hoernisch

Shiny white world: Designbureau Meierei created a white, 3-x-3-x-5-metre Styropor structure to symbolize the perfection of design. Inside, within a black box, visitors viewed images of our imperfect, everyday life.

