



SANTA & COLE

Santa & Cole, Urban Division

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Santa & Cole, Urban Division

For Santa & Cole the public space is a place of exchange and interrelation in which the elements of street furniture should encourage the citizens to make better use of them; there is no greater metaphor than the invitation from a bench to sit on it.

It has therefore spent twenty years developing its Urban Division, working on the design of urban elements which allow better, more human and social spaces to be created; elements with a better experience of use and less maintenance, where light, water, rest, safety or information find a reasonable and accessible place.

Urban elements constitute the vital image of the city, playing a role of representation and as a collective emblem. Therein lies the mission of Santa & Cole's Urban Division: to furnish the city, to design engaged urban elements, in the service of coexistence, which contribute to equipping the urban public space with a collective meaning.

A little history

When in October 1985, Javier Nieto Santa, Gabriel Ordeig Cole and Nina Masó founded Santa & Cole Ediciones de Diseño, the *raison d'être* of the new company was to seek objects for the home which contributed more than matter: serenity, culture and wellbeing. The Urban Division was created in 1989 with this same philosophy.

Thanks to the boost represented by the candidature of Barcelona for the 1992 Olympic Games, Santa & Cole began a passionate adventure hand in hand with municipal technicians and architects, authors of the Olympic projects and of the city's projects, designing and publishing a series of elements which contributed to changing the image of what was finally the Olympic City. The success of this collaboration was due to the great unity of all those involved, who were moreover on the same wavelength, and the trust that the politicians placed in the architects who led the work from inside and from outside the City Council, in addition to the companies which gave them support and believed in the world that was being born in that magic period.

And this participation gave rise to Santa & Cole's first catalogue: street lamps such as the *Lamparaalta* or the *Lampelunas*, designed by Beth Galí and Màrius Quintana (1983) and José A. Martínez Lapeña and Elías Torres (1986), respectively; wall mounted luminaries such as the *Macaya*, by M^a Luisa Aguado and Josep M. Julià (1986); or benches such as the *Nu*, by Jordi

Henrich and Olga Tarrasó (1991) began a division which today accommodates a wide variety of products and designers not only intended to offer a function, but also to give an atmosphere to the urban scenario of which we all form part.

After more than twenty years, the Urban Division has grown up, has evolved with the changes which have occurred in Spain, in Europe and worldwide and sells to over 30 countries and represents 70% of the Santa & Cole group's total sales.

Friendly and sustainable elements

For Santa & Cole, urban elements are not designs to stand out; they are objects to be used in daily life. Friendly, useful elements, adapted to their surroundings and which maintain a coherent syntax with the space where they are located and with their users. Thus, Santa & Cole's publishing criterion in its Urban Division seeks to equip the urban space with a collective meaning, toward a more human and respectful city.

Criteria of **rationality and functionality**, the elements must be simple and without ornaments, adapt perfectly to the function for which they were created; of **sustainability**, that is, respecting the environment through the use of recyclable materials, minimizing light pollution or using wood with a lower environmental cost; of **accessibility**, the design of the elements must consider as far as possible their use by the physically handicapped or those with reduced mobility; with **minimum maintenance**, that is durability, resistance to the aggression of the urban, physical or environmental setting, stability and adequate ageing; of **conviviality**, the urban elements must not stand out, but rather be used in daily life, so they must be friendly, respect the environment, affable and coherent with the space where they are located and with their users; of **creativity and aesthetics**, the urban elements determine the aesthetic configuration of the space: they possess artistic value, they are pieces by recognized and occasionally historical authors; of **dynamism**, that is to say a commitment to the quality of the space for passers-by and the areas destined to road traffic, giving importance to the spaces intended for pedestrians and for bicycles; and finally **the value of the absences**: the elements which inhabit the urban scenarios must speak for themselves, without the need for actors for the spectators to understand the meaning of the scene.

A future commitment

Over the years, and hand in hand with great architects and designers, the Urban Division's editorial team has succeeded in building up a coherent and plural catalogue.

Today, Santa & Cole's Urban Division points toward the future in two very clear directions: environmental involvement in the improvement of the life cycle of the urban elements, that is to say by applying criteria of sustainability to the entire development, working life and subsequent replacement and disappearance of the element. And, on the other hand, with the collaboration of the company Urbiótica, Santa & Cole is committed to developing new technologies applied to the design of urban elements which allow intelligent systems to be incorporated so as to extend their functions and energy saving programmes, to achieve a lighting which varies its power in accordance with the space, the uses and times, etc., with the aim of minimizing consumption without this directly affecting the design.

The vocation of Santa & Cole's Urban Division today is the same as when it began, to contribute to improving a harmonious development of our cities.