

What is an "abitacolo" Bruno Munari for Robots di Milano

The word "abitacolo" has many meanings in Italian. It is the cockpit in a single-seater airplane for the pilot and his controls and instruments. In cars or lorries it is the space for driver and passengers. In space-ships it is the space for the space-man with all the necessary for living and navigation control. It is, in fact, habitable space reduced to the necessary minimum. Figuratively speaking it is also an individual's intimate recess, the internal site of everything that goes to make up his own world.

In houses built for adults children do not always have their *abitacolo*. The lucky ones have a bedroom of their own to furnish and decorate as they please. The less fortunate have to make do with a bed, a chair, perhaps a table and somewhere to put their books, keeping their clothes in a suitcase, as I did for a long time. They have no *abitacolo* where they can retire to study, meditate, read, write, sleep, listen to their own kind of music and talk to their friends. This is the need that has given rise to this *Abitacolo*, with is meant as a temporary solution of the problem, both structurally and aesthetically. *Abitacolo* is a steel structure reduced to its necessary minimum. The module is 20 cm, and this gives maximum range for adaptability.

The welded steel of the structure is plastic-coated with heptoxide resins at 200 degrees. It is very light grey in colour. The base of the structure includes a table that can be set at different heights and is inclinable.

Four shelves for books, 80 cm long each, can be attached just where you like.

Two grids of 80x190 cm, can be fixed at any height on the four uprights which are also ladders to reach the different levels. They are so simple to set up that no instructions are required. The two metal baskets can be attached anywhere and hold anything, wherever you like. The overall weight is 51 kilos.

"Abitacolo" is very solid: even the fattest and least-welcome of adults could climb up without breaking it. Tests have shown, in fact, that *Abitacolo* can bear the weight of 20 people.

The price has not yet been decided, but "Abitacolo" will undoubtedly cost less than a table, five yards of book-space, a small cupboard, two beds and four ladders. *Abitacolo* is absolutely neutral, as it is just an essential structure, imposing no aesthetics of its own. On the contrary, it can be adjusted and transformed at will by its inhabitant, becoming more invisible in more intrusive circumstances.

Bruno Munari