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Juicy Salif

A quarter of a century on, the remarkable *Juicy Salif* from Alessi remains as much a starter of conversations as it is a squeezer of oranges and lemons.

TEXT: MAX TUTTLE

'Design icon' is perhaps an overused term – but in the case of the striking *Juicy Salif*, it's entirely appropriate. Designer Philippe Starck took the hitherto purely functional juice squeezer and transformed it into an internationally recognised icon that belongs to the permanent exhibitions of numerous museums worldwide, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris.

Designed by Starck in 1990, *Juicy Salif* looks more like a futuristic living space or Martian invader than it does an object designed to extract juice from citrus fruits. Unlike conventional squeezers, this three-legged creation towers over work surfaces, its inverted teardrop suspended high up.

Of course, as part of the Alessi family, *Juicy Salif* is not just beautiful but functional too, its tapered and splined central section coaxing fruit juices to the pointed tip, ready to drip into a waiting receptacle underneath.

The best and most revered design icons usually come with a story attached, and *Juicy Salif* is no exception. Legend has it that company

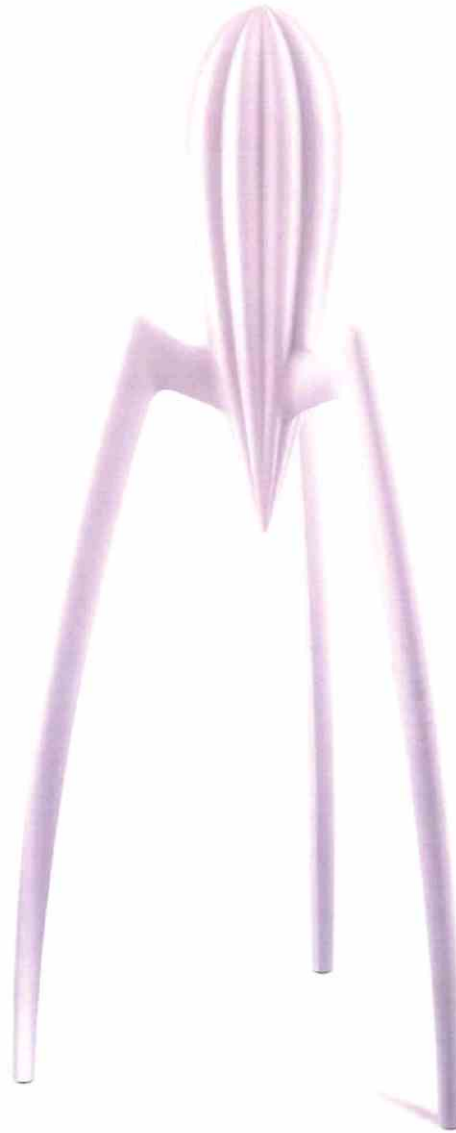
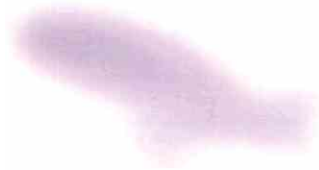
founder Alberto Alessi asked Philippe Starck to create a tray – a core component of the Alessi catalogue since the early '20s.

Following months of silence, a letter arrived from an Italian island where Starck had been holidaying. The letter contained a paper napkin, on which were the designer's sketches for a new citrus squeezer. As Starck was squeezing a lemon over his plate of squid, he was inspired by the shape of the mollusc, which led to the creation of *Juicy Salif*.

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of this amazing creation, two special editions have been released, one in cast bronze, the other in cast aluminium with an opaque white ceramic coating.

The winners of the recent *Identity* Design Awards each received the opaque white *Juicy Salif*.

Iconic, sometimes controversial, the quarter-century of *Juicy Salif* is being celebrated with new versions that take it as far away from the humble juice squeezer as imaginable. ■



identity [revelation, design, property]