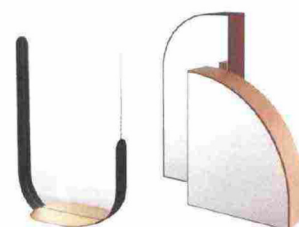


The need to loosen the rational grip on the object, but without sacrificing its honesty of use, finds a different but symptomatic expression in the disjointed tops of two tables, Rotazione Sincrona by Gum Design for 0.0 Flat Floor (based on the rotation of the moon around the earth, defined by the gravitational curvature of space-time geometry) and Trama by Elena Salmistraro for Stone Italiana (which grafts the postmodern ornament into the late-modernist structure). The Alba bookcase by Bernhardt & Vella for Arflex also features elements of geometric cutting from which small graphic suns rise as if from behind a horizon of shelving. The spread of these 'regressive' aesthetics on the contemporary scene has deeper reasons as well. They speak of an era in which the user, surrounded by 'friendly' interfaces so lacking in friction as to become slippery, deprived of the rough contact of things, feels the grip on reality also slipping away. There is the attempt to revive



Below, Arceau mirror by Numéro 111 for **Ligne Roset**, a form that is half rational, half ornamental. Center left, the Rotazione Sincrona table by Gum Design for **0.0 Flat Floor**, based on the rotation of the moon around the earth (photo Laura Fiaschi); right, the Trama bar table by Elena Salmistraro for **Stone Italiana**. Below, the Bon Ton table by Baldessari & Baldessari for **Adele-C**.



it, by leaving pockets of deviance inside the rationalist grids. No longer tracing back to a single ordering principle, the parts that go into these objects shift towards non-assimilable perspectives, in pursuit of a new 'granular' presence of the real. This can be seen in the Arceau mirror by Numéro 111 for Ligne Roset, open and fragmented like the image of the user. And it is even more evident in the Gaku project by Nendo for Flos, a domestic frame whose presence does not add but subtracts fullness from the population of objects in the home, using empty space (a fundamental ingredient of the oriental aesthetic) as a totally abstract ornamental value, suggested by the poetic poise of the object that thus enacts (without displaying) the bond between immanence of function and transcendence of form. ■