



Designing together

Dutch Design Week was held in Eindhoven until 29 October 2023.

"Designers are on a mission," states a press release of the event, with the aim of offering solutions to global challenges on a local level. This includes the climate crisis as well as the future of our nutrition or a more efficient layout of urban environments.

by Anna Moldenhauer | 10/27/2023

The urgency to create sustainable design, to shape a future for society that offers more options for daily life than before, was clearly noticeable when walking through the numerous exhibitions at Dutch Design Week. Instead of lifting up a new product, the predominantly young exhibitors analyse the processes of design and their effects. Their interdisciplinary designs reveal a desire for critical reflection on the present, for positive change in our environment, as well as the question of one's own identity and task as a designer. Seizing the opportunity for change, developing better alternatives, sharing visions and translating good ideas into reality was the agenda – because everything we use is designed, shaped, created, from buildings to chairs. "Picture this" is appropriately the motto of Dutch Design Week 2023. In her opening speech, designer Miriam van der Lubbe, Creative Head of DDW, called on designers to recognise their roles in shaping change, to advance the processes and to visualise the possibilities for mediation in society: "we have to be aware, we have to do our work very well", she said.

This year, the work of the students of the renowned [Design Academy Eindhoven](#) could be seen in the Heuvel Galerie, a shopping centre, thus being brought out of the design bubble of the industry and into the middle of one of our everyday temples of consumption. The joint presentation of six furniture companies, "Future>Factory>Furniture", in the central Klogebouw exhibition building also illustrated the endeavour to find a common path: [Arco](#), CS Rugs, Gelderland, Label van den Berg, Lande Family and [Leolux](#) vividly show a selection of the problems, opportunities and status quo of their manufacturing processes by means of the exhibits. "We can only make a difference if we combine our efforts in the field of sustainability, start a dialogue about highlighting the dilemmas of the industry. Every link in the chain has to make its contribution to the piece of furniture and its way to the market," was the statement.

For the first time, DDW is also presenting "Beacons", international designers who are pioneers in their field and, in contrast to the previous "Ambassadors", enter into long-term collaborations with the event to share their knowledge: the German industrial designer [Stefan Diez](#), the Dutch social designers Sanne and Neele Kistemaker from Muzus Design and the British artist and designer Yinka Ilori.

Ten highlights of Dutch Design Week 2023



Photo: Anouk Moerman

Frans van Rooijen & Michael Sailer: "Xyhlo Biofinish"

Part of the [Secrid Talent Podium](#) is the CO2 and climate neutral "Xyhlo Biofinish" by Frans van Rooijen & Michael Sailer: An environmentally friendly wood finishing method suitable for outdoor applications such as residential construction, wooden façade cladding or gardening. The wood is protected in the course of an oil treatment and the application of a biological fungal layer, all raw materials are obtained from natural and local sources. The biological protective layer can repair minor damage itself and requires little maintenance. The wood treated with "Xyhlo Biofinish" can be completely returned to the natural cycle.



Photo: about today

Lucas De Man and Pascal Leboucq: "Possible Landscapes"

The exhibition "Possible Landscapes" by Biobased Creations at the Embassy of Circular & Biobased Building, directed by Lucas De Man and Pascal Leboucq, shows numerous examples of circular and biobased building and offers insight into research on the regenerative landscapes of today and tomorrow. Like modular houses that are relocatable, made from natural, local materials and placed on stilts to impact nature as little as possible.



Photo: Seoungjun Lee

Seoungjun Lee: "Long Live the Pine"

With his installation "Long Live the Pine", Seoungjun Lee shows a plug-in system made of pine wood. In the form of windows as portals, the exhibits thematise conventional Korean life, in which pine was highly valued in the construction of buildings as well as in everyday customs. Thanks to the designer's high level of craftsmanship and sustainable production, he also creates a new context for the special aesthetics of pine wood.



Photo: Anwyn Howarth

Grietje Schepers: "Ellipt"

The "Ellipt" light installation graces the 2000 square metre exhibition space in the "Kazerne" restaurant. The geometrically intertwining patterns of the lampshades are the result of a series of experiments in which Schepers produced 3D shapes from a flat surface with minimal use of materials and no cutting waste. The series is made from 100 percent natural Dutch felt by Holland Wol Collectief, and finalised using an industrial cutting technique. Thanks to the open shape of the felt leaves, the luminaires are sound-absorbing and ideal for large project spaces.

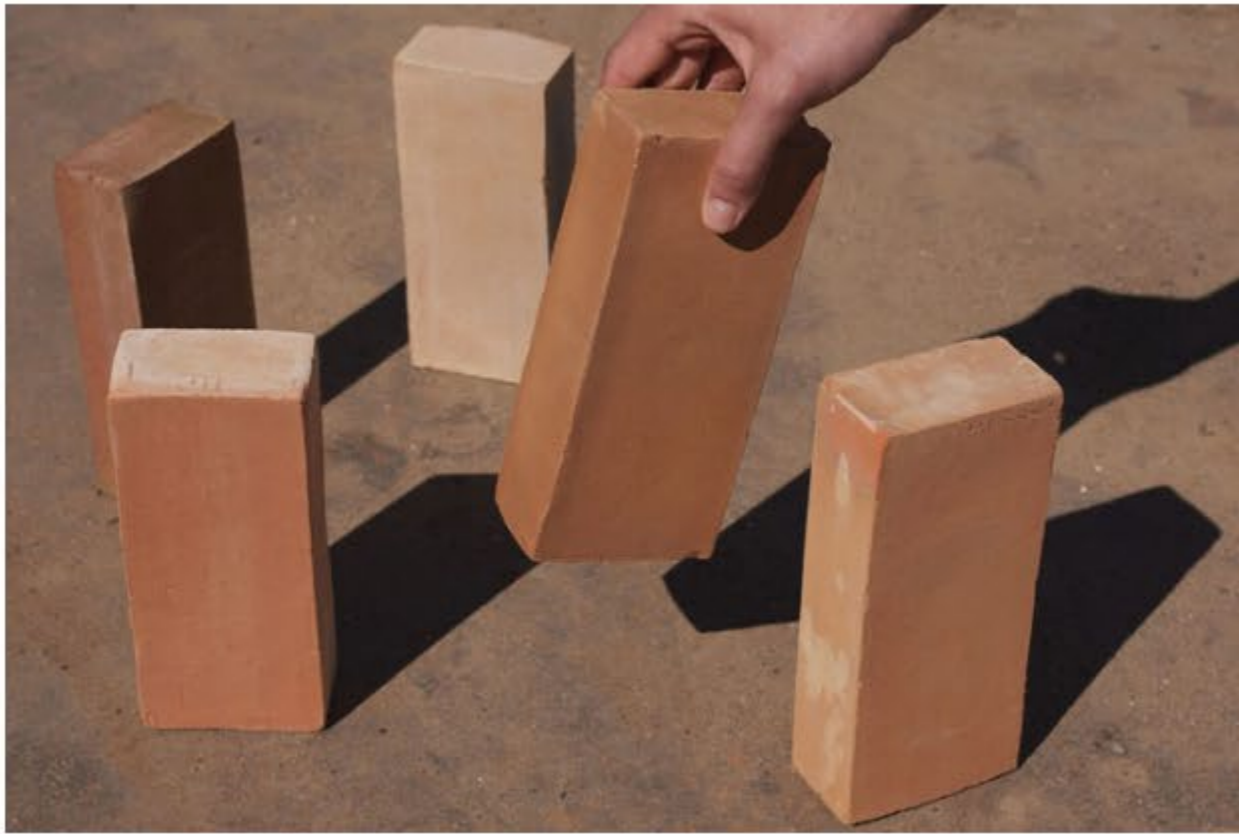


Photo: Anouk Moerman

Emy Bendsdorp: "Claybens"

Emy Bendsdorp's "Claybens" design research project is developing a technique to transform PFAS-contaminated clay soils. According to Claybens, the per- and polyfluorinated chemicals – industrial chemicals that are widely used in the production of goods due to their water- and grease-repellent properties and have thus also found their way into the environment – are destroyed at temperatures between 900 and 1200 degrees Celsius. These temperatures can also be reached in brick production. The process eliminates the toxic content in the clay and creates new bricks in parallel. The project is part of the Secrid Talent Podium.

Also interesting: Yi Design makes bricks from recycled ceramic waste: the lightweight, porous "Permeable YiBrick", for example, is made of 90 per cent recycled ceramic waste and can be used in areas where water permeability is important - such as paving soils prone to waterlogging. Tête-à-Terra, in collaboration with Mono Earth and Kalebodur, uses waste fragments from ceramic production for clay bricks. A Waste Epiphany recycles bricks and concrete by hand using the rammed earth technique.



Photo: Luna Wirtz Orvald

Luna Wirtz-Ortvald: "Reconstructing a Practice"

With "Reconstructing a Practice", Luna Wirtz-Ortvald explores the development and craft of traditional thatched houses made of seaweed on the Danish island of Læsø". A study of the island's historical, cultural and ecological past reveals the past contextual practices of local building processes and forms a future perspective for the preservation of the rich cultural heritage.



Photo: Lotte Wigman

Lotte Wigman (Studio Lo.tek): Negotiating Boundaries

Lotte Wigman's material research "Seacrete" shows an environmentally friendly building material that is intended to serve as an alternative to concrete and cement. Oysters and mussels provide the basis as sources of lime. The project proposes a building style that understands erosion and succession as design processes and takes the rise in sea level into account. The circular habitats are intended to help restore the balance between humans and the ecosystem.



Photo: Max Kneefel

Hedwich Hooghiemstra & Aline Gerards: Stilteruimte

In their project, Hooghiemstra and Gerards explore how to create a space for rest and contemplation that both fits the context and focuses on the spatial experience of its users - from hospitals to schools to offices. By designing a quiet room that is accessible to everyone in the environment, their aim is to give them a break in their hectic everyday lives, for example to counteract exhaustion-related illnesses. Likewise, offering a quiet room promotes a new acceptance in our society for the necessity of breaks.



Photo: Thijs Biersteker

MB>CO2 by Thijs Biersteker

The art installation visualises the hidden effects of our daily data use, for which energy is generated from coal and gas in the data centres: "MB>CO2" by Thijs Biersteker calculates its CO2 footprint and translates it into CO2 air blasts that are blown into a living biotope. According to Biersteker, an average Zoom meeting is equivalent to a 140-metre drive in a petrol car.

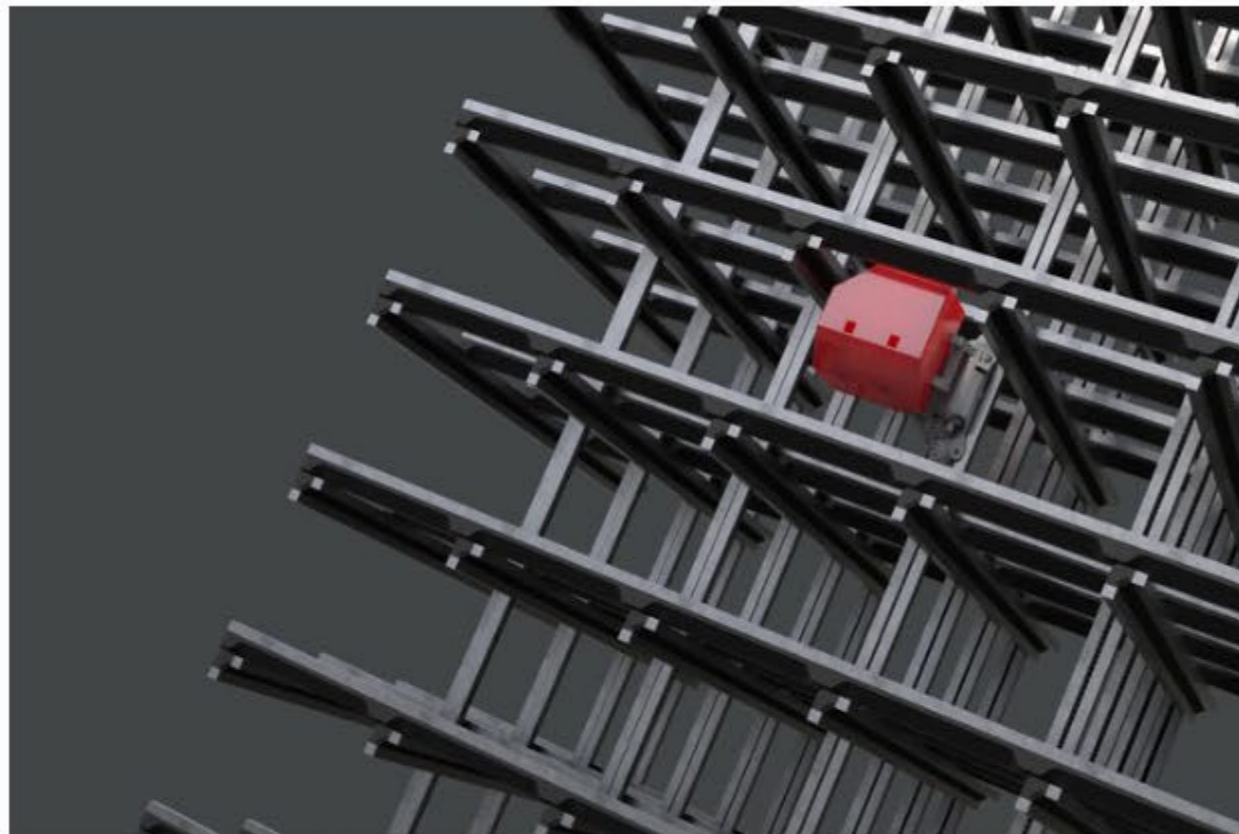


Photo: Sebastian Gyorgy

Sebastian Gyorgy: Voxelium

In his project "Voxelium", Sebastian Gyorgy investigates how nature's construction methods could be transferred to design and architecture: "In contrast to humans, nature uses only a handful of standard building blocks, the amino acids, from which proteins, complex molecules, cells, organs and finally living beings are made. They are completely modular and all parts are reused. Inspired by this, I investigated how we can build and break down structures in a similar way. Similar to pixels on a digital screen or cells in a body, I imagine a world where materials become self-organised and digital. Download a model from the internet and your chair would transform into a new design. When it's no longer usable, it's disassembled so it can be assembled into the next item that's needed."



Photo: Anouk Moerman

Tip: Solarlix

Together with designers, architects and engineers, Solarlix develops energy-generating façade panels that offer a wide variety of colours and structures in addition to their function. The aesthetic solar modules for the façade offer architects and builders more options for designing sustainable buildings. The project is presented as part of the Secrid Talent Podium.

> Dutch Design Week

Image gallery Impressions from Dutch Design Week 2023



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