

# Waste Age

Tour Proposal



## The Design Museum Touring Programme

The programme was set up in 2002 with the aim of bringing design exhibitions to audiences around the UK and internationally. Since then, the museum has organised more than 130 tours to 104 venues in 31 countries worldwide.

The Design Museum's touring exhibitions range in size from 150 to 1,000 square metres and cover all areas of design – architecture, fashion, furniture, graphics, product and more.

## About the Design Museum

The Design Museum is the world's leading museum devoted to architecture and design. Its work encompasses all elements of design, including fashion, product and graphic design. Since it opened its doors in 1989, the museum has displayed everything from an AK-47 to high heels designed by Christian Louboutin. It has staged over 100 exhibitions, welcomed over five million visitors and showcased the work of some of the world's most celebrated designers and architects including Paul Smith, Zaha Hadid, Jonathan Ive, Miuccia Prada, Frank Gehry, Eileen Gray and Dieter Rams. On 24 November 2016, the Design Museum relocated to Kensington, West London. Architect John Pawson converted the interior of a 1960s modernist building to create a new home for the Design Museum, giving it three times more space in which to show a wider range of exhibitions and significantly extend its learning programme.

In May 2018, the Design Museum was awarded the title of European Museum of the Year.

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The Design Museum, London



## Exhibition overview

### CURATORS

**Gemma Curtin** is Curator at the Design Museum

**Justin McGuirk** is Chief Curator at the Design Museum

### EXHIBITION DESIGN

**Material Cultures**

### GRAPHIC DESIGN

**SPIN**

### VENUE

**Design Museum, London**

23 October 2021 - 20 February 2022

### TOUR AVAILABILITY

Available from Spring 2022

### SPACE

Approx. 900 square metres

The Stone Age, the Bronze Age and Steam Age all defined historical periods that shaped the future of humankind and our planet. The world produces 2 billion metric tons of rubbish each year, estimated to increase to 3.4 billion metric tons by 2050. With only 15% of waste reclaimed, we are in a Waste Age, where the impact of our lifestyle of careless design, production and consumption is leaving an indelible and potentially toxic layer that will shape the lives of future generations.

The things we need to live and thrive have been produced with materials and energy taken from the Earth. The world's resources are finite, with vast reserves now no longer underground but held within the buildings, infrastructure, systems and stuff that surround us. Design has a central role to ensure that the environmental impact of what we produce now and in the future is considered. In three sections, Waste Age tells the story of the environmental crisis created by our 'take, make, waste' economy. The exhibition presents the current crisis and design's role in the problem. It then explores how design can transform our waste into valuable resources, promote new ways of living with the Earth and not from it, and where there is no such thing as waste.



Copper extracted from machines to be sold back to Europe.

## Peak Waste

### Grasping the scale of the crisis

Peak Waste confronts visitors with the epic scale of the global waste problem we face and the urgent need for change. It shows how our production of waste has been historically managed but escalated since the mid 20th century. It shines a spotlight on the hidden workings of mass-production and consumerism. It reveals the realities of landfill and the global networks that have evolved to dispose of our toxic waste streams. Visitors will feel overwhelmed with the scale of the problem.

- **The scale of the problem** features prints by photographer Edward Burtynsky, whose work highlights and communicates the issue of waste.
- **Where does our waste go?** presents a large-scale, digital *Waste Tracker*, which follows the journey of our daily waste and includes the infographic representation of some of the main statistics and facts.
- A detailed **Timeline** with text, images and object shows how we got to our current waste saturation - a waste stream.
- **Throwaway culture, Built-in obsolescence, Why we love plastic** present how we made a disposable culture and the issues with mass-manufacturing.
- **Artist Commission.** To present the scale of the problem, the exhibition features a new commission by artist Ibrahim Mahama, which responds to the issue of e-waste at Agbogbloshie in Ghana.

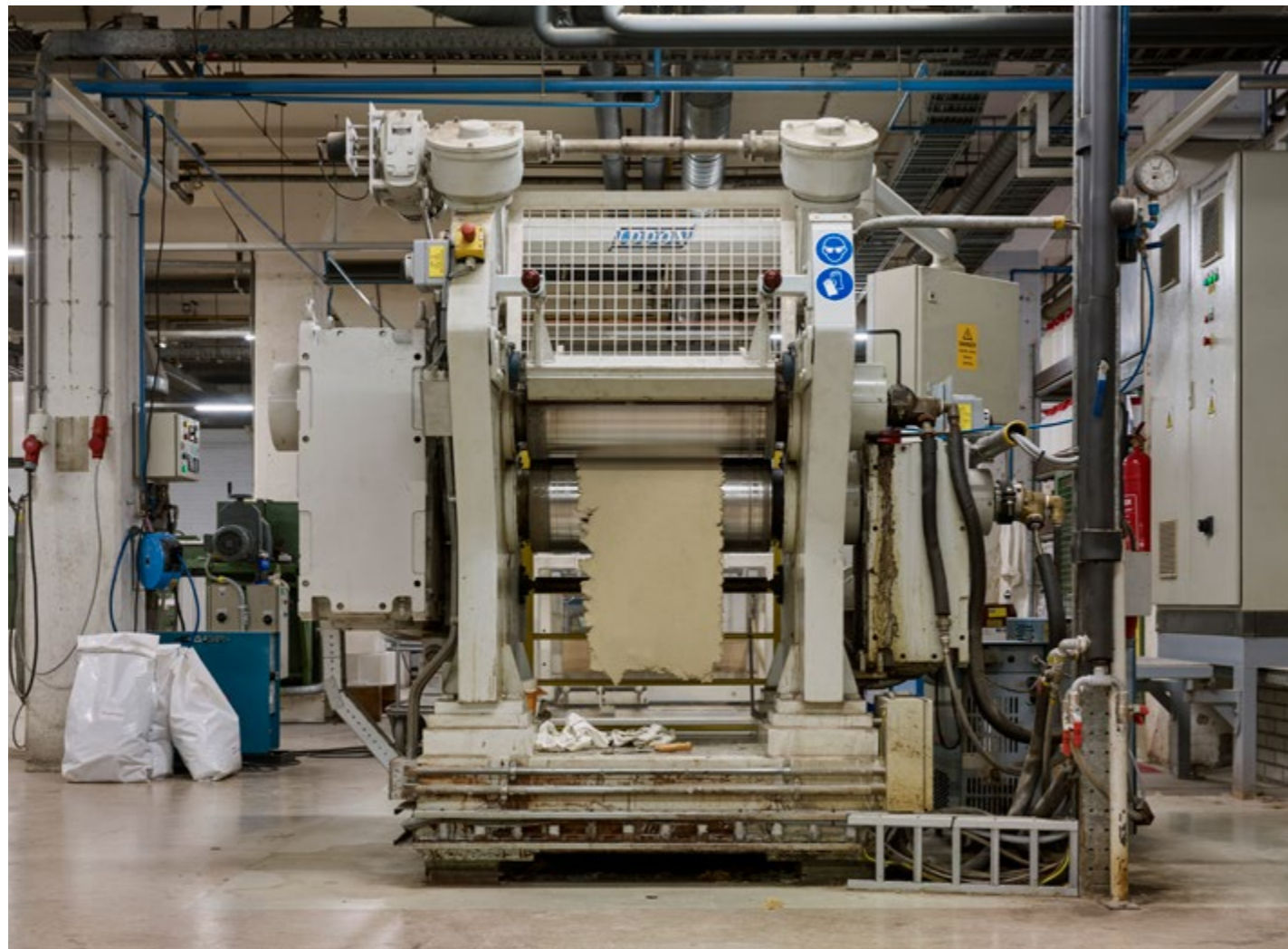




## Precious Waste

### Changing our minds about value

Today 90% of the raw materials used in manufacturing become waste before they leave the factory, while 80% of products get thrown away in the first six months of life. The excesses of our throwaway economy have left us with huge amounts of waste. While we address that systemic problem, this should be seen as a resource waiting to be transformed into something desirable. Here visitors encounter imaginative approaches from designers who are redefining what's considered waste, finding and capturing the value in it, as well as examples of scalable commercial production using new and existing waste streams, from ocean plastic, electronic waste, textiles and construction. Visitors will enter a welcoming and ordered environment of active transformation inspired by recycling and see the machinery and technologies used in upcycling waste into new resources. The visitor will feel the energy of dealing with waste, of being active and engaged.



*Renoleum*, Christien Meindertsma, commissioned by Forbo Flooring, 2019.

A research project of Christien Meindertsma that investigates the possibility of re-using old linoleum floors.



- **What is it made of?** features the work of designers, including Studio Drift and Christien Meindertsma, who are drawing our attention to the issues of sustainability and encouraging us to reflect on what the things around us are made of. A wall of recycled materials will help explain the material complexity and how design can help make the circular economy work more efficiently.
- **Reclaiming precious resources from both industrial and consumer waste** presents projects from industries and by designers that are recycling waste more efficiently using digital technology and connections to embed and revalue the practice. It includes the following categories: Plastic, Electronic, Food, Fashion/Textile and Construction.
- **Reuse/Repair/Renew – investing in change** presents the work of designers and architects, including Celia Pym and Lacaton and Vassal, who are looking at new ways to mend or reuse. A process that values resources and recharges our emotional connection to things around us.

Recupel, e-waste sorting and recycling centres.

Recupel is a Belgian non-profit organisation that co-ordinates the collection and processing of e-waste products. They collect 44 million electronic items per year and either repair and resell them or, more frequently, disassemble and recycle them, returning the raw materials to the technical material cycle, ready to be used again in new products.







## Post Waste Experimentation and wonder

The third theme, Post Waste, brings together visionary designs that are shaping a future where resources are managed for the long term and there is no such thing as waste. It shows a variety of examples, from new soluble polymers for packaging to garments made from algae and orange pulp, to buildings made from sustainable grown material or that are designed for deconstruction. Post Waste celebrates approaches that are designing out waste and supporting regenerative design and the circular economy. In the third section, visitors transition into visions of the near future, a laboratory/home inspired environment where materials and products are grown rather than extracted. The earthy beauty of new bio no-waste materials such as seaweed, hemp or mycelium, should be highlighted.

Opposite: *From used to coffee cups to living furniture and The Hive, mycelium bug hotel*, Blast Studio (The Biological Laboratory of Architecture and Sensitive Technologies)

Studio Blast transforms waste cardboard into a biomaterial by the insemination of reishi, an edible fungus. The reishi's roots, called mycelium, naturally degrade the waste, transforming into a material that can be manipulated and 3D printed.

Above: *The Framework Laptop*, 2021.



- **Growing a no waste future** presents a dazzling selection of innovative grown materials, or materials made from agricultural waste, including the work of designers Fernando Laposse and Atelier Luma. These designers offer new alternatives to extracted oil or gas based polymers with materials that are soluble or will degrade, and hope for a no waste future.
- **Ancient wisdom** explores global new and ancient no-waste living. It encourages visitors to learn and listen to the alternative non-western narrative. This is a global issue that effects those who are often causing the least harm.
- **Alternative systems for living without waste** promotes changing how we live and consume. Are we addicted to consumption? New for new's sake? This subsection looks at new systems that help to reduce waste and consumption, the sharing economy, renting instead of owning things to reduce consumption, and it includes a talking head film of advocates/campaigners/designers/social scientists to provoke discussion about 'living without waste'.

*Totomoxtle*, Fernando Laposse. Made with husks of heirloom corn in Tonahuixtla, Mexico, 2016-ongoing.

Totomoxtle is a veneer material made with the husks of heirloom Mexican corn. It serves to regenerate traditional agricultural practices in the village of Tonahuixtla, providing income for impoverished farmers and promoting biodiversity for future food security.



Sequin Dress by Charlotte McCurdy x Phillip Lim, 2020.  
Made from algae bioplastic sequins on a biodegradable  
plant-based dress made of plant fibres.

## Terms and conditions

### Hire fee, on request, includes:

- Curation and exhibition concept
- Tour management by Design Museum staff
- Exhibits
- Images and films
- Exhibition text in English
- 2D and 3D design concept
- Selected display kit

### Costs payable by the venue:

- Hire fee, in instalments
- Exhibition and graphic design adaptation
- Share of transport and crating costs
- Storage of empty crates
- Nail-to-nail insurance
- All costs relating to exhibition production
- Installation and de-installation costs
- Marketing



## Contact

To find out more about this exhibition and other tours available from 2021 onwards, please contact:

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[designmuseum.org/exhibitions/touring-exhibitions](https://designmuseum.org/exhibitions/touring-exhibitions)

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