



centre d'innovation
et de design
au Grand-Hornu



dach&zephir. Eritaj Kontré © photo Jilès Cléodore

Presse
release

PLANT FEVER

Towards a Phyto-centred Design

Project by studio d-o-t-s produced by the CID au Grand-Hornu

October 18 → March 07, 2021

INTRODUCTION

An exhibition about the hidden potential of plants

For centuries, our inherent alienation from nature has prevented us from truly understanding the potential of plants as more than simple materials or decorative objects.

In recent years, however, new scientific discoveries and philosophical approaches have reframed our relationship with them, questioning the dualism human/nature so much rooted in Western thinking. Echoing the belief of American ecologist Ian Baldwin that "we should try to think like plants", designers, scientists and engineers, started to look into plants' structures and behaviours adopting them as allies to develop solutions for current and upcoming environmental and social issues.

Plant Fever proposes to look at the future of design from this new vegetal perspective, moving from a human-centred to a phyto-centred design. Spanning from products and fashion items to material research, open-source devices and emerging technologies, a selection of approx. 50 exhibits - representing the work of creatives from more than 20 countries - will investigate notions such as plant blindness, eco-feminism, forestry, biomimicry and upcycling, but also post-colonialism and cultural landscapes.

Conceived as a militant exposition, *Plant Fever* will not fear to take a stand, ask critical questions and call for new radical perspectives, involving the public in a positive, inspiring and constructive conversation.

Parallel to the physical space of the museum, the discourse of the exhibition will be further developed through an accompanying web platform, as well as a dedicated conference & workshop programme.

PLANTS AS RESOURCES

Plants are essential to our survival on Earth. Not only do we need them to breathe and eat, but we also depend on them to dress, shelter, and heal ourselves. Their features constitute the basis for practical ancestral know-how, and the materials they provide us with are at the core of our economies. Yet, despite this, we often disrespect and overexploit them to the detriment of both human and non-human communities.

Lately, however, the consequences of our behaviours have prompted several designers to reconsider their role in the wasteful consumerist society we live in. Alarmed by the growing Climate Emergency, many of them are now exploring more holistic approaches to the material resources we make use of. Compostable vegetal matters are slowly replacing plastics, projects seeking symbiotic relationships with plants are on the rise and objects repurposing by-products of non-virtuous monoculture models are blooming.

PLANTS AS PETS

Helped by the advent of modern architecture - which provided suitably open, bright and warm interiors - in the course of the 20th century plants have become ubiquitous in our domestic and office environments where they have been assigned a mainly decorative role. Since the early 2010s, though, the motivations driving us towards the vegetal kingdom seem to have shifted away from the merely ornamental. Plants have become therapeutic feel-good companions that help us escape the alienating condition of urban life.

Described by some as symptomatic of the millennials' generation and its widespread use of social media, the current trend of lushly-vegetated interiors mixes the desire for highly Instagrammable settings with a sincere thirst for botanical knowledge and a need to embrace otherness. Sensitive to this change, designers have started to invent DIY devices meant to reconnect us with plants and to create pots and containers intended for precise specimens.

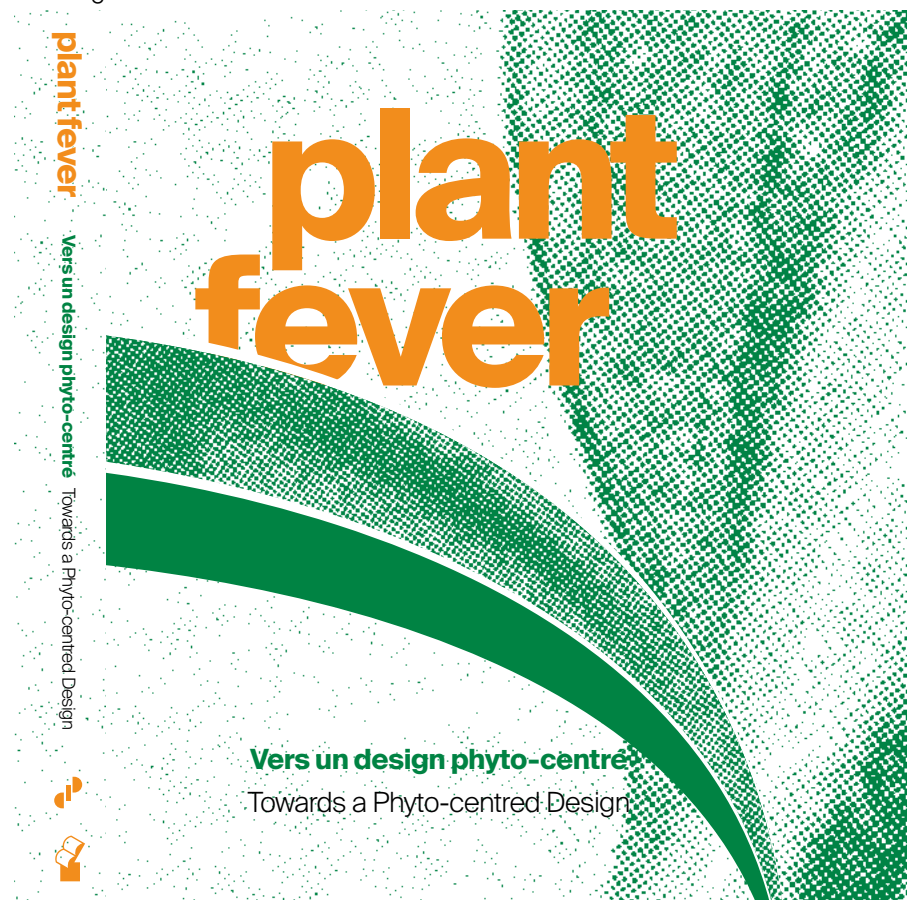
PLANTS AS ALLIES

The recent findings that suggest that plants are sentient beings; the ongoing climate crisis linked to the Anthropocene; the ethical debate around artificial intelligence, plant engineering and synthetic biology: all these new perspectives are shaking up the Western world's vision of human supremacy over everything else, including the vegetal realm.

Informed by novel scientific discoveries and stimulated by growing moral concerns regarding non-human beings, designers, artists and engineers have started to look into the uncovered capabilities of plants to imagine a future in which thinking like them and collaborating with them could become the new norm. While in most cases their goals remain closely human-centred, these explorations are leading the way towards a more vegetal-conscious approach to design which goes beyond plant's instrumentalisation and mechanisation.

CATALOGUE

As part of the *Plant Fever* exhibition, the CID and Stichting Kunstboek are publishing a catalogue with essays by authors, visual essays and interviews with leading figures who are rethinking our relationship with the vegetal realm.



- Edited by: d-o-t-s (Laura Drouet & Olivier Lacrouts)
- Introduction: Laura Drouet (d-o-t-s)
- Foreword: Marie Pok
- Contributions: Emanuele Coccia, Carole Collet, dach&zephir, Quentin Hiernaux, Overmind, Catriona A. H. Sandilands, Ana Silva, Penny Sparke, Trajna collective
- Translations: Right-Ink, Laura Maggi, d-o-t-s
- Art direction & graphic design: Matthieu Visentin
- Graphic design coordination: Laetitia Centritto
- Direction: Marie Pok
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DESIGNERS

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- Helene Steiner
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- Trajna collective (Gaja Mežnarić Osole, Andrej Koruza)
- Matthieu Visentin
- Henriëtte Waal, Mevce Çiraci & Anna Rita Spagnu
- Tim van de Weerd
- Florian Wegenast

CELC

It is in the framework of the exhibition that the CID received the support of the CELC, the European Confederation of Linen and Hemp and the French company LGD01 - publisher of custom-made wall canvas -for the creation of the installation of the linen flag x #PLANTNEWS by Matthieu Visentin and studio d-o-t-s. The installation is inspired by international news headlines and highlights the growing plant fever.

The CELC is a European agro-industrial organisation bringing together all stages of flax and hemp production and processing - 10,000 companies in 14 EU countries. The CELC runs a sector of excellence in a globalised context.

A mission based on the innovative and environmental qualities of its fibres, of which Europe is the leading producer, guaranteed by the EUROPEAN FLAX® and MASTERS OF LINEN® traceability brands, and promoted among professionals and consumers thanks to the I LOVE FLAX campaign.

D-O-T-S STUDIO PROFILE

Laura Drouet (FR) and Olivier Lacrouts (IT/FR) founded d-o-t-s in 2014. Currently based between Brussels (Belgium) and Milan (Italy), the duo develops editorial and curatorial projects that focus on alternative social dynamics, off-the-record stories and experimental design perspectives. Defined by the participatory and interdisciplinary approach, their work spans from writing and exhibition-making to hands-on workshops.



TEAM

Curatorship: Laura Drouet (studio d-o-t-s)

Scenography: Benoît Deneufbourg

Graphic identity: Matthieu Visentin

Coordination: Olivier Lacrouts (studio d-o-t-s)

Direction: Marie pok

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SOCIAL MEDIA

Instagram — www.instagram.com/cidgrandhornu
— www.instagram.com/plant_fever

Facebook — www.facebook.com/cidgrandhornu
— www.facebook.com/plantfeverexhibition

Formafantasma
Botanica Collection, 2011

© photo Daniele Misso, Marlou Rutten



Tamara Orjola
Forest Wool, 2016

Photo by Ronald Smits
© Design Academy Eindhoven



Pablo Figuera & Álvaro Goula
Viride

© photo Goula Figuera

Spyros Kizis
Archichair, 2015

© photo Kizi Studio



Harpreet Sareen and Pattie Maes
Elowan

© photo Sareen & Maes



Dossiofiorito
The Phytophiler, 2014

© photo Omar Nadalini

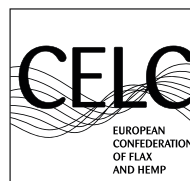
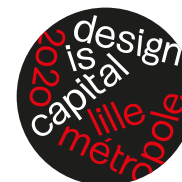
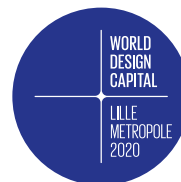


Liz Ciokajlo
Hemp Shoes with Materials

© photo Stephanie Potter Corwin



PARTNERS



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OPENING TIMES

Every day from 10 AM until 6 PM, except Mondays.

The Grand-Hornu is closed on 24, 25, 31st December and 1st January.

The office can be reached during weekdays from 8 AM to 4.30 PM.

ADMISSION FEE

- Combined ticket for the Grand-Hornu site / CID / MAC's: €10
- Discount: €2 or €6
- Group rates (minimum 15 ppl.): €6
- School groups: €2
- Free for children under 6
- Free entry on the first sunday of the month
- Free guided tour from Tuesday to Friday at 15.30, Saturday at 11.00 and 15.30, Sunday at 15.00 and 16.30
- Audio-guides for the historic site: €2 (FR / DUTCH / GERMAN / ENGL / IT / SP)

BOOKING NUMBER

Advance reservation required for guided tours (by appointment) of exhibitions and/or historic site (FR / DUTCH / GERMAN / ENGL).

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reservations@grand-hornu.be

CATERING

Rizom is the sixth project of Chef **Sang Hoon Degeimbre**.

This restaurant, located in the heart of the Grand-Hornu, offers a cuisine that melts different cultures together. In addition, Rizom also provides a new fast food service in the cafeteria that was recently transformed by designer Benoît Deneufbourg.

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