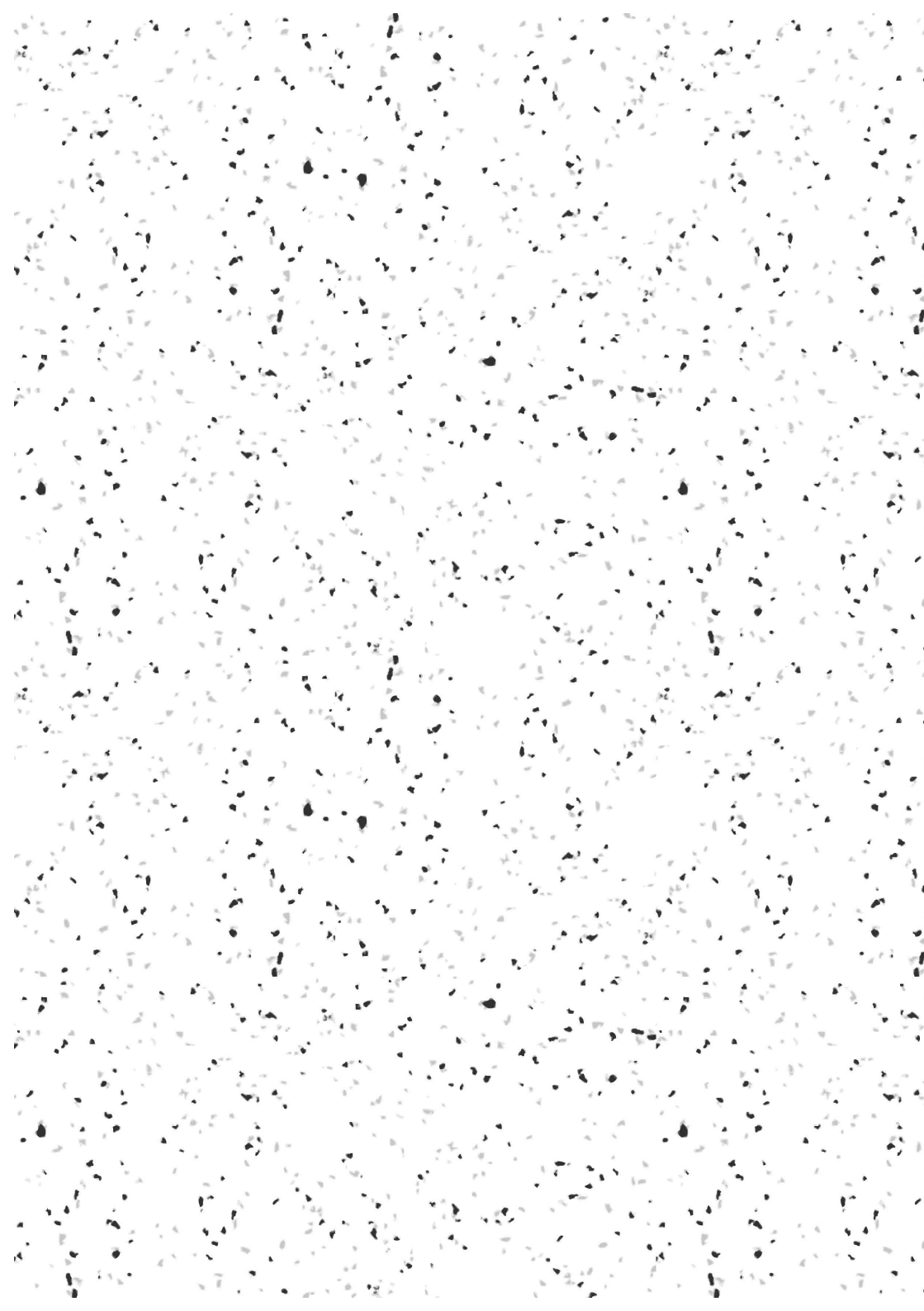


**EXTRA  
ORDINARY**

20 July—22 August 2015

The Aram Gallery



This mix of 14 international designers have all found extraordinary ways of working with materials, products or processes that most of us consider ordinary. Whether through object, lighting, furniture or jewellery, they have a common ground in questioning attitudes to value and beauty, seeing potential where it has been overlooked, and proposing alternative directions for craft and industry.

From playful material experiments such as Luisa Kahlfeldt's cardboard stools and Ying Chang's bubble wrap vessels, to Odd Matter's large-scale thinking about how we use and abuse furniture, all the designers selected for the exhibition show incredible resourcefulness, imagination and daring. They find new ways of seeing what surrounds us.

Out of the ordinary, these designers have discovered surprising aesthetics, created structure from surface materials, and invented new and sophisticated methods for recycling. Jorge Penadés' Structural Skin, Silo Studio's P P P P P and Krupka—Stieghan's Recreate Textiles focus on the creative potential of industrial waste, while others, like Martijn Rigters, play with process. Rachel Harding's Wonderfluro, Soft Baroque's Mouldings and Paul Puskarich's Heatsink Chair all give standard industrial products a new narrative as something decorative and alluring.

As well as extraordinary thinking, many have demonstrated extraordinary skill. It's not easy to take matter designed for one task and explore how it could fulfil another. We hope this show will inspire every visitor to look at everyday objects and materials afresh, and to wonder about their extraordinary possibilities.

Riya Patel, curator

## Duct Work

DAVID STEINER, 2013

Four stools in galvanised steel

Joining a circular duct to a square one is a common problem when manufacturing ventilation ductwork for large buildings. The job is still done by hand, by specialist makers who pleat and spot weld the galvanised steel so the connection is seamless.

David Steiner worked with such specialists to create a series of four stools that develop this language into a formal design: ranging from a basic join, with just a few connection points around the circumference of the seat, to a more complex one.

The series highlights a surprising element of craft embedded within an ordinary industrial process and lifts a common detail into a thing of inherent beauty.

## Structural Skin

JORGE PENADÉS, 2015

Two side tables in brass and leather scraps bound with bone glue

Huge waste is created in the global leather industry, the result of only 13% of a hide being desirable to high-end fashion, furniture, footwear and automotive companies. Jorge Penadés research revealed that there is no established system for recycling waste leather, and that it often ends up as fertiliser despite having been already chemically treated.

Structural Skin proposes an alternative. By compressing scraps into square profiles bound with bone glue, Penadés finds a structural use for the material with an unusual inherent aesthetic. The scale of the problem demanded a solution that packs a lot of waste leather into each product. The double side table contains 28kg of discarded leather, and the single side table 20kg.

## Recreate Textiles

KRUPKA—STIEGHAN STUDIO, 2015

Bowls and sheet materials in cotton yarn remnants

Katrin Krupka and Philipp Stieghan's research looks at the potential of cotton waste, which is usually burned by industry. Their experiments searched for useful products that could come from cotton textile flock, tumbler fluff, yarn remnants and cut off cloth edges.

A series of bowls, and panels of sheet material are two of the results. They are made by combining cotton yarn remnants with a starch-based bioplastic, creating a natural fibre composite material that is biodegradable. The objects were made by hand laminating and pressing the material into shape. The marbled effect of the panels is specific to the process, and the bowls show a three-dimensional approach to working with the new material.

## Crown Jewels

LEX POTT, 2012

16mm and 18mm rings in Nordic gold

Two rings are made by drilling through a ten- and 20-cent Euro coin respectively, leaving just the rims intact. It's a simple intervention that elevates the ordinary coin, something we walk around carrying every day, into a piece of strange jewellery.

Lex Pott's aim was to shift the common perception of a coin and open a discussion on the value of material. Historically, a coin's material was related directly to its worth, a piece of silver or gold, but today's coins have a nominal value and are made in alloys that span lifetimes. The ten and 20 cent Euro coins are made in Nordic gold, a mix of copper, aluminium, zinc and tin.

## Cardboard stools

LUISA KAHLFELDT, 2012 and 2015

### Three stools in corrugated cardboard

Luisa Kahlfeldt made an experimental stool series by manipulating corrugated cardboard. Each stool is made by rolling lengths of laminated cardboard into a rough cylinder. Shaving down the edges reveals the coloured layers as well as the pattern of the corrugation, exposing an inherent aesthetic of the material that is not usually seen.

The aim of the project was to give cardboard, one of the most commonly recycled materials, a more interesting and unusual second life.

## Cutting Edge

MARTIJN RIGTERS, 2014

### Polystyrene sofas made with a specialised hot wire cutter

To make Cutting Edge, Martijn Rigtters took an ordinary process – the use of hot taut wires to cut through foam or polystyrene for making models – and adapted it with extraordinary results.

Four wires were used to create a frame with a rough sofa-shaped profile. A large block of polystyrene was then pushed through the frame to create an extruded sofa form. The irregular surface of the sofa is created by a degree of flexibility in the wires and the pushing movements of the user, making each one slightly unique.

The final piece can be treated with a polyurea coating to give it colour and durability for use indoors and outdoors.

## Deposit

ODD MATTER, 2015

### Furniture recycling concept, pieces made in Jesmonite

Odd Matter's project proposes an alternative to the ordinary life cycle of furniture. These three pieces show the evolution of the Deposit system.

The owner of the first piece would pay a deposit for the raw material, in this case, cast slabs of coloured Jesmonite. The deposit would be returned when the owner no longer has a use for the table, and the slabs would be ground down and re-cast into a furniture piece for the next owner. The third piece shows that with multiple castings, instead of the furniture's quality deteriorating as it is passed down, its materiality can actually be enriched. At each stage there is the opportunity for the piece to evolve into a different type of furniture.

## Heatsink Chair

PAUL PUSKARICH, 2015

### Armchair in aluminium heatsink panels

Electronic components that require cooling often employ a heatsink to radiate excess heat into the surrounding air. Typically made of metal panels with fins, they are designed to have a large surface area to volume ratio.

Paul Puskarich noticed the unique aesthetic of heatsinks and wondered if they could be put to an alternative use. This chair is made from large and heavy industrial heatsink panels which the designer joined together into the form of a seat.

The chair design aims to highlight the architectural lines of these ordinarily hidden components.

## Wonderfluro

RACHEL HARDING, 2015

Eight wall lamps in laser cut aluminium with spectrum glass

Used in 70% of all public lighting, fluorescent lamps have become a background element in our everyday lives. Lighting almost every stairwell, train station and car park in the UK, these lamps are often seen, but rarely treasured.

Rachel Harding uses spectrum glass to multiply these white lamps into an array of colours, creating a rainbow effect that changes when viewed from different angles. The design transforms these ordinary off-the-shelf products, emphasising their graphic and simple beauty.

## Re-engineering Desire

ROISIN JOHNS, 2015

Jewellery made from discarded materials

Roisin Johns sourced the raw material for this collection of jewellery and accessories from landfills, skips and factory floors. Her designs transform the unwanted ephemera she came across into a range of unusual objects that provoke a sense of curiosity as to how they are made.

The pieces are made from second-life materials – eggshell, paper, foam, leather, polystyrene and metal – that are “re-engineered” with a questioning attitude to what makes something desirable.

## PPPPP

SILO STUDIO, 2013—ONGOING

Bowl, tray and table in a plastic and paper composite

Silo Studio began experimenting with PPPPP (pressed polypropylene paper pulp) for the Wallpaper Handmade project, after being shown a new material developed by paper manufacturer UPM. The material is made of polypropylene and 40% paper fibre, a by-product of manufacturing.

With the help of injection moulding experts Bibby Engineers, the material was transformed into long “spaghetti”-like strands, given fantastical colours by feeding small amounts of granules into the injection moulding machine. The strands were pressed into two-part moulds while still malleable in order to form the bowl, tray and table.

## End Grain

SIMIN QIU, 2015

Desktop accessories in pine off-cuts

End Grain seeks to make something beautiful from the timber off-cuts left over from making large furniture.

Pine is commonly defined as a cheap softwood, due to its ability to grow fast. But its organic structure gives it a patterned end grain that has so far been overlooked for its aesthetic qualities. To make his range of desktop accessories, Simin Qiu applied a craftsman-like attitude to the material, precisely cutting and gluing left-over pine pieces to show off an aspect of timber we always knew about but perhaps never appreciated.

## Mouldings

SOFT BAROQUE, 2013

Table in glass and pine  
quadrant mouldings

Soft Baroque's project finds a new use for the cheap pine architraves and trims you can find for less than £5 in the DIY store. By gluing together short lengths of pine quadrant mouldings, the designers found they could be arranged into two sinuous plinths, strong enough to hold a glass top and make an experimental table.

The project also questions how these decorative timber profiles came to be. In a postmodern way, these derivatives of classical architecture are stuck on to walls and windows to give the impression of solid timber or stone. It's this principle of misuse that is reflected in the table – the sense of a product or material being used in the wrong way.

## Neolastic

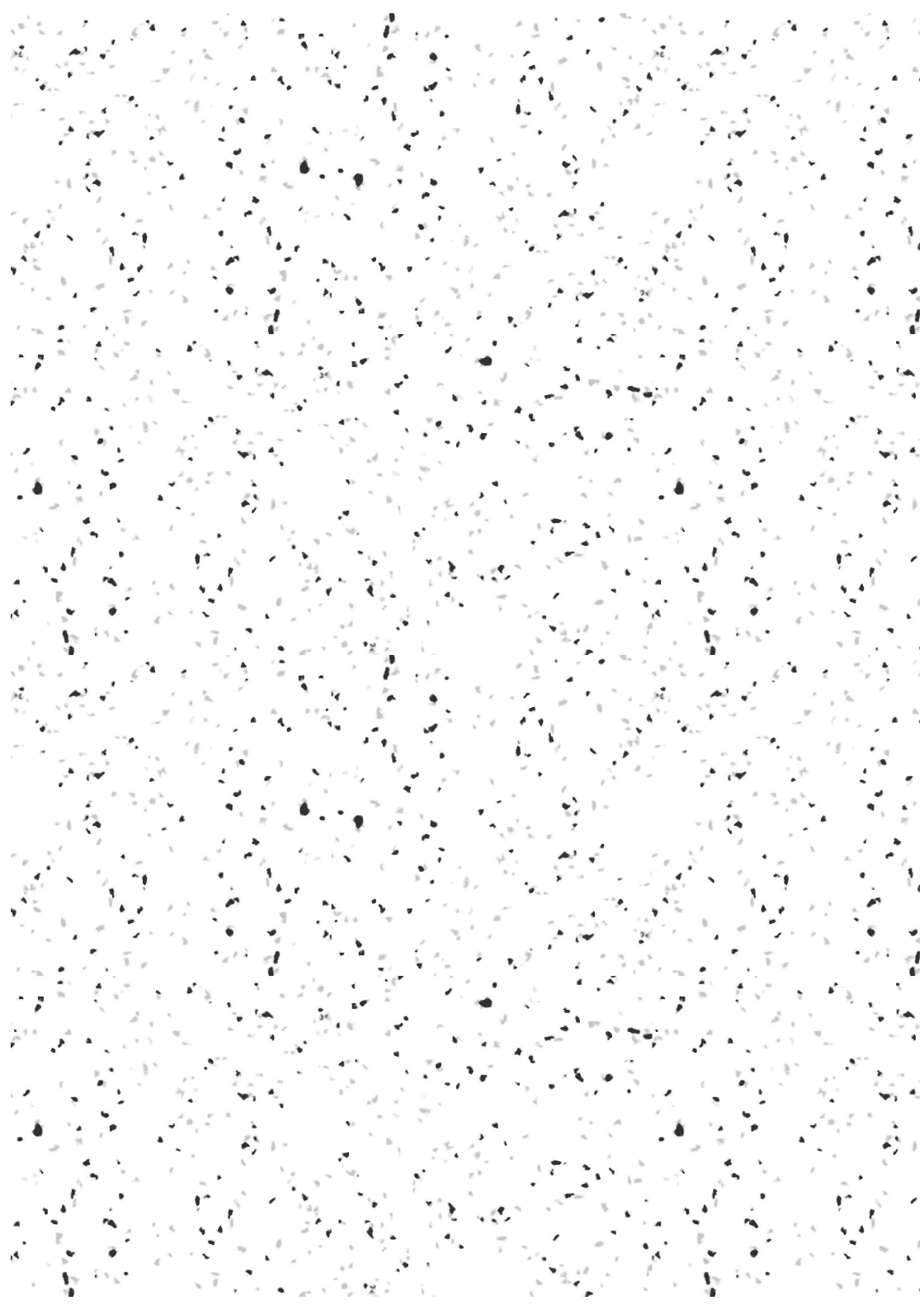
YING CHANG, 2013—ONGOING

Vessels in bubble-wrap  
formed by heat shrinking

These vessels are formed by wrapping fragile objects (glass bottles and ceramic pots) in bubble wrap and using a heat gun to shrink it around them. With a scalpel, the resulting skin is carefully removed with the shape of the original object preserved.

Ying Chang's project started out as a material experiment. Considering the depletion of natural materials, Neolastic projects a near future where we must re-appraise the potential of manmade materials that have been overlooked.

Bubble wrap is used to protect precious objects, but this project seeks to reverse those roles, challenging our perceptions of beauty and value by making the wrap into something precious.



# THE ARAM GALLERY

**FOR EXPERIMENTAL OR NEW DESIGN**

The Aram Gallery is an independently  
curated space that promotes  
and encourages understanding  
of contemporary design

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CURATOR Riya Patel

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