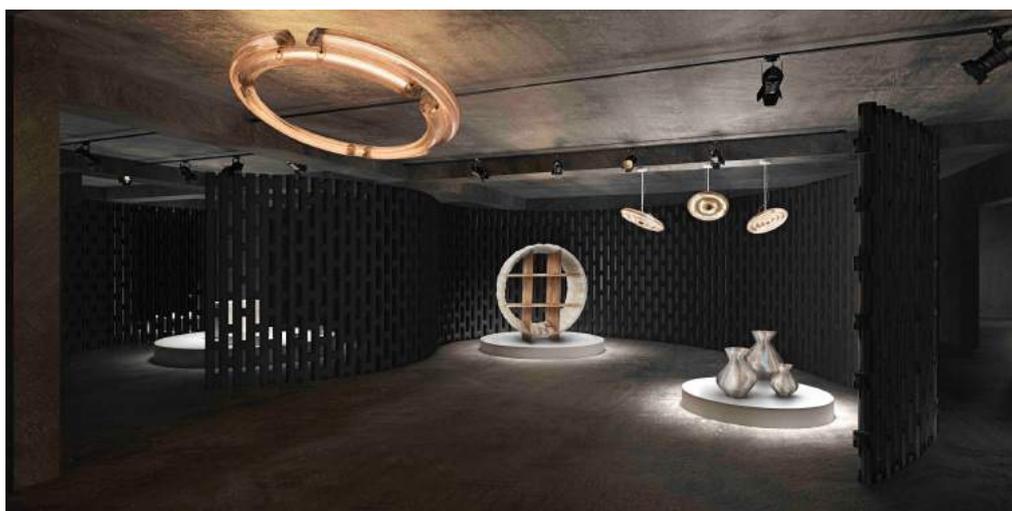


# Beyond the Chipper

London Design Fair presents its second Material of the Year: Plastic  
20–23 September 2018



Plastic: Material of the Year at London Design Fair. Exhibition designed by Ioanna Lupascu of Ortie Studio.

Clogger of oceans, polluter of soils, scourge of sustainability – plastic is the *bête noire* of the modern material world. One way of addressing the problem is to reduce plastic use in design; another is to **reinvent** it.

For its second **Material of the Year** event (following last year's celebration of Jesmonite™), **London Design Fair** is shining its spotlight on the most controversial material in contemporary making. Four design studios have been selected to create and present work from the vanguard of innovation in plastics – demonstrating new techniques, processes, technologies and material compositions that reduce or eliminate plastic's negative environmental impact.

These designers aren't simply breaking down and reforming existing plastics from chippings; they're venturing '**beyond the chipper**' and conventional recycling measures to **create** and **explore** new materials. Ranging from Tokyo's **Kodai Iwamoto**, who transforms plumbers' piping into elegant sculptural vessels, to Brighton's **Weez & Merl**, who have developed a method of turning waste carrier bags into beautifully patterned tabletops, each of the designers is tapping into the waste streams of mass plastic production to introduce value and meaning to the world's most reviled substance.

Showing in **Hall 13** of London Design Fair at the **Old Truman Brewery**, the Material of the Year exhibition is being designed by the artist and architectural designer **Ioanna Lupascu** of **Ortie Studio**. Fittingly, the exhibition space will be divided using Movisi's modular freestanding LINK partition system. Made from expanded polypropylene, a lightweight plastic foam, LINK is 100% recyclable, hypoallergenic and emission-free – ensuring the whole exhibition is backdropped by another example of sustainable plastic innovation – and another reason to be optimistic about the material's future.



(Left) Vessels by Kodai Iwamoto Design. (Right) Freshnel 3 Ring Vase by Dirk Vander Kooij.

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## Material of the Year designers

### Kodai Iwamoto Design

Born in Kagoshima, Japan and now based in Tokyo, Kodai Iwamoto is a product designer with an interest in exploring the junction between traditional craft processes and mass-produced materials.

By bringing the methods of glassblowing to the kind of cheap PVC pipes generally used in plumbing, Iwamoto produces a range of vessels, which can vary in form depending on the shape of the mood, the air pressure applied and the speed at which the pipe surface is heated. The result is a collection of beautiful hand-made objects that give new life to mass-produced plastics.

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### Dirk Vander Kooij

Since his time studying at Design Academy Eindhoven, Dutch designer Dirk Vander Kooij has been exploring ways of creating 3D-printed furniture and other interior items made with reclaimed synthetic. Using a machine extruder of his own design, he transforms polycarbonate objects such as CDs and chocolate moulds into ribbons of molten plastic that can then be layered and shaped to create uniquely textured products, reinventing plastic as something durable and precious.

At London Design Fair, Vander Kooij demonstrates the versatility of this process, with a collection of products including his Changing Vases – sculptural vessels that create different effects depending on the viewing angle; the Iced Bubbles and Oak shelving unique which contrasts the solidity of wood with an enclosing circle of glass-like bubbled plastic; his adjustable Fresnel pendant LED lights and their latest iteration, the Buitenhuis Chandelier.

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(From left) Fully recycled LDPE tabletop, Dirk Vander Kooij on his Hollow Chair, photography by Lisa Klappe, Louise & Madeleine Thilly of Weez & Merl.

## Weez & Merl

AKA Louise and Madeleine Thilly, Weez & Merl is a Brighton-based studio set up in 2015 to reduce the quantity of plastic going to litter or landfill. Specialising in Low-Density Polyethylene (LDPE), commonly found in carrier bags and bubble wrap, the studio has developed a method of melting and reforming the plastic to create a durable, marble-effect surface material that can be formed into coasters, tabletops and more, using the techniques of woodworking.

At London Design Fair, Weez & Merl presents its first fully recycled LDPE table, alongside a stand-alone feature wall of translucent tessellating tiles, heat-fused together, and a lighting collection – all made from waste plastics sourced from businesses in Brighton & Hove.

## Charlotte Kidger

A recent graduate of Central Saint Martins' MA Material Futures, Charlotte Kidger is a material designer seeking to develop ways of reevaluating and reengineering waste substances to create new sustainable materials.

She is currently investigating the possibilities of polyurethane foam dust – a waste plastic from CNC fabrication processes – which can be cold-cast to create a versatile composite that can form the base material for 3D sculptural and functional objects. Having created a range of colourful pots and vessels from the composite, she is in the process of upscaling the technique to create a table to exhibit at London Design Fair.



(Left) Marble-effect coasters made from waste plastics sourced from Brighton & Hove. (Right) Polyurethane foam dust objects by Charlotte Kidger.

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All four designers and their reimagined-plastic products will be on display in **Hall 13** on the second floor of the **Old Truman Brewery** from **20–23 September 2018**.

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For more images and information on the Material of the Year project and the designers involved, please contact **Jessica Knowles** at [j.knowles@zetteler.co.uk](mailto:j.knowles@zetteler.co.uk) or on +44 (0)20 3735 5855.

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## NOTES TO EDITORS

### About London Design Fair

Set in Shoreditch, the creative heart of London, the London Design Fair is a four-day industry event that brings together 500 exhibitors from 28 countries, including independent designers, established brands, international country pavilions, features and exhibitions. Launched in 2007, the London Design Fair has earned itself the reputation as the go-to trade show during the annual London Design Festival, hosting the largest collection of international exhibitions, designers, brands, country pavilions, features and exhibitions. Each year, over 28,000 influential retail buyers, producers, architects, interior designers, press, designers, and design-savvy public will attend to see the very latest in furniture, lighting, textiles, materials and conceptual installations, from all around the world.

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