



PRESS RELEASE | Aug 2017

13 WAYS WITH WATER

An exhibition about the world's most abundant material

19–24 September 2017



'Water is essential yet invisible; it is such a fundamental substance, to the point that everyone takes it for granted.'

– Mike Vanis, co-founder, Unit Lab

For **London Design Festival 2017**, a group of 13 designers are coming together at the **Copeland Gallery** in Peckham's Bussey Building to explore **Water**. Each of them has created a new work for the exhibition, responding – creatively, technologically or emotionally – to water and the vital role it plays in the natural and human world.

Other than that one-word theme, the brief has been entirely open to interpretation. This, coupled with the diverse backgrounds and disciplines of the participating designers, has resulted in a huge spectrum of products, projects and installations. The works on show include ceramics, electronics, robotics, lighting, installations and, of course, water itself.

Water is, above all else, a showcase of ideas. While some of the designers pose questions; others propose solutions. Where some unpack the inherent beauty of water; others underline its ecological importance or centrality to human life. Some pieces, such as Andy Sheen's 'Kinetic Light', explore the ways in which flowing water behaves as a force. Some, including Dean Brown's 'Reflections' and Kirsi Enkovaara's 'Landscapes of Water' are aesthetic responses to water's movement or optical effects; while others – like Henrik Nieratschker's 'I Am Water' thought experiment and Philipp Ronnenberg's 'Dryvver' robot are more speculative explorations of water's meaning and purpose.



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WATER DESIGNERS

Andy Sheen

Based in London, Andy Sheen is a multidisciplinary designer with a background in sound design and audio-processing. Today, he works extensively in electronics and programming, creating products and installations in collaboration with designers and engineers around the world, as well as pushing the boundaries of audio and technology in his own design practice. He currently works with Goldsmiths' Interaction Research Studio and Hackney start-up Technology Will Save Us.

Kinetic Light is the result of an accidental discovery. During a sound-design project using piezoelectric sensors (which generate electrical charges from mechanical pressure), Sheen realised that the sensors could be used to flicker a light with varying intensity depending on the pressure applied. For **Water**, he demonstrates how the energy of a waterfall can be translated into a spectacular light display, exhibiting both the Kinetic Light itself and showing a film of his invention in action.

'I'm really interested in the concept of energy created from impact. The light is a great demonstration of how energy-harvesting can be used to generate power without any external power source.'

@andymsheen

Dean Brown

Born in Scotland, Dean Brown is a London-based designer of objects, installations and interiors. From flat-pack mobile museums to textile waterfalls and ceramic deconstructions of the colouring process, Brown's work combines the highest levels of craftsmanship with ground-breaking creative thinking. His designs have been shown at the Aram Gallery, Mint Gallery, Schloss Hollenegg for Design and the V&A. He spent four years working as a senior consultant for Fabrica in Treviso, Italy, before setting up his studio in London, where he is now a member of Goldsmiths' Interaction Research Studio.

Reflections is a meditation on the doubling of objects and the optical effects of water, without incorporating its physical presence. Brown has amassed collection of objects – some made and some found – and designed their mirror images as they would appear refracted in water's surface. By displaying both the thing itself and its water-reflected counterpart, Brown explores the behavioural qualities of water, while changing the presence and meaning of the objects it reflects.

'The overall effect will be an eclectic palette of materials coming together to bring form and definition to an otherwise non-existent water surface.'

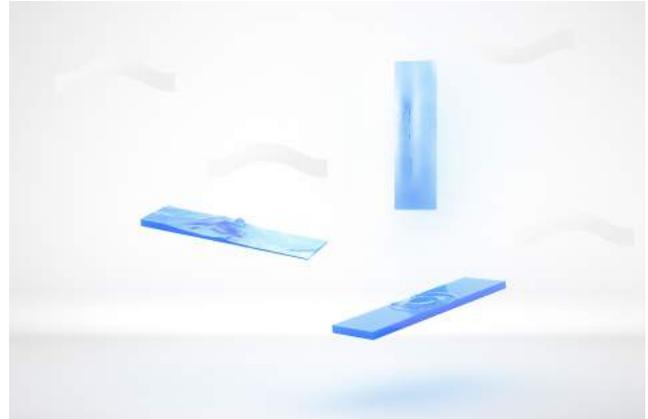
mrdeanbrown.co.uk



(Left) Reflections by Dean Brown (Middle and Right) Kinetic Light by Andy Sheen



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(Left) Mineralia by Fernando Laposse (Right) I Am Water by Henrik Nieratschker

Fernando Laposse

Born in Paris, raised in Mexico and now based in London, Fernando Laposse is an industrial designer whose work typically explores and challenges whole-system thinking, ephemerality, over-consumption and the politics of food through design objects, performance and video. He holds a BA in product design for Central St Martins, and was named one of the 70 UK young designers to watch by the British Design Council in the material world category. His clients include Bentley, Daum, Tom Dixon, Selfridges and Unilever, and his work has been shown by the Modern Art Museum of Trento, Gallery Libby Sellers, the South London Gallery, Merci, In Residence and at the St-Etienne Biennale.

Mineralia is a gas lamp in brass and blown glass that uses the reaction between calcium carbide and water to create a flame. Based on a mechanism used in 19th-century miners' lamps, the piece offers a commentary on the social and ecological consequences of metal mining, via functional and aesthetic allusions to the vast quantities of water involved in the process.

'The future of water and the future of mining are completely interconnected. Through the Mining Lamp I'm trying to make a commentary on the ecological and social consequences our lust for metal has.'

fernandolaposse.com

Henrik Nieratschker

From his studio in Portland, Oregon, German designer Henrik Nieratschker explores the space between design and art, technology and science, fiction and theory. Interested in utopian thinking and speculative futures, he uses graphic design, sculpture, writing, video and interactive media to interrogate the possibilities and implications of an increasingly complex and connected world. Nieratschker is also a cofounder of experimental design studio proto/meta and curatorial art collective Research and Waves.

I Am Water is a thought experiment in which water is given a conscious personality through the application of AI technology. Inspired by the government of New Zealand granting the Whanganui the legal rights of an individual in accordance with its status in Maori culture, Nieratschker offers a vision of how technology might give a voice to a non-human entity, while using literature, science, film and philosophy to vocalise an alternative worldview from the perspective of the hydrosphere.

'It engages the user in conversation with a very different view of the world, that marks a distinct alternative from common, anthropocentric ideas and values.'

henriknieratschker.de



Interaction Research Studio

Based at Goldsmiths, the Interaction Research Studio is an interdisciplinary practice-based research initiative that designs computational systems for everyday life. Rather than concentrating on design as problem-solving, the studio creates design-led devices that encourage playfulness and exploration in the user, and places a strong emphasis on monitoring the experiences of the volunteers who live with its designs. Its findings are presented in research articles and exhibitions for academic, industrial and public audiences.

The **DIY Underwater Camera** is a submersible camera made out of everyday household items and constructed from open-source plans. The exhibition presents the finished object, the plans and image and video footage taken by cameras suspended in London's waterways.

gold.ac.uk/interaction

Studio PSK x Karl Toomey

Founded by Irish product designer Patrick Stevenson-Keating, Studio PSK is an award-winning design and creative studio based in Peckham. Using design and technology to create engaging experiences for brands and organisations, the studio's work has been shown in venues such as Tate Modern, the London Design Museum, MAD New York, MU Gallery Eindhoven, Macau Tower China and NID India. For **Water**, PSK is working with fellow Irish designer Karl Toomey. Former Head of Creative for It's Nice That's creative agency, Anyways, Toomey frequently works at the meeting point of design and humour, and was the creator of Funny Business – a joke book testing the sense of humour of corporate chat bots, and viral spoof football sensation Gary Goals.

Cold Hands, Warm Hearts — Snapshots from a culture far, far away is a playful speculation about life in the world's frozen places, and an imaginative exploration of how human society might adapt to a transformed climate, while maintaining the technology and social structures we enjoy today. Consisting of 3D-printed architectural-style models, the piece takes the rudimentary idea of the igloo as a transient functional home and, through storytelling, considers how it could be developed to human needs such as relationships, wellbeing, growing and sharing.

'The idea of igloos felt most poignant. In a way they are such a succinct expression of water and design. A temporary dwelling made from a naturally occurring material — a perfect collaboration between human and nature.'



(Left) DIY Underwater Camera by Interaction Research Studio
(Right) Cold Hands, Warm Hearts — Snapshots from a culture far, far away by Studio PSK x Karl Toomey



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James Patmore

James Patmore is a multidisciplinary designer and maker who specialises in product, bespoke installation and interior design. He worked with Audi, Veuve Clicquot and the V&A before making his solo debut at the London Design Festival 2014 with the site-specific Horizon installation and his homeware collection, created using exclusively local materials and manufacturers.

Cloud is an experimental piece of lighting sculpted via a polyurethane 'gun' – effectively a three-dimensional sketch laced with micro LEDs. The result of Patmore's experiments into transforming liquids into solid mass, Cloud's organic form is a response to the movement and behaviour of water.

'I have explored how water sits within objects, taking their form through complete malleability, and what happens when the restraints of the container are removed.'

jamespatmore.com

Six:Thirty x Matteo Loglio

Digital design and brand agency Six:Thirty was founded in London by Russian designer Roman Levin and Welsh designer James Cuddy. Their collaborator for **Water**, Matteo Loglio, is an award-winning interaction designer working at Google Creative Lab, a visiting lecturer at Central Saint Martins and the founder of interaction design lab oio. As founder and former principal designer of Primo Toys, Loglio is the creator of Kickstarter sensation Cubetto, the robot-based introduction to coding for young children.

Natural Networks is a system that enables water to write poetry. Positioned in canals, buoys with environmental sensors capture light, temperature and motion data that is fed through a neural network and translated into machine-made poems. As the conditions change, the language and structure of the poems is reconfigured. This speculative piece thus employs digital communication to encourage the viewer to reconsider their relationship with natural spaces.

'Our project is an incitement to reflect on the limits of language and the creative potential of artificial intelligence. The intriguing messages generated encourage consideration of, and engagement with the physical locations that created them.'

Kirsi Enkovaara

Splitting her time between London and Bangkok, where she designs for a Thai lifestyle brand, Kirsi Enkovaara is a Finnish designer whose South London based design studio explores themes related to movement, the interaction between the natural and the artificial as well as the traces these leave behind. A graduate in design products from the Royal College of Art, with degrees in contemporary art and furniture design, Enkovaara has exhibited extensively throughout Europe. Her work is currently on show at the Helsinki Design Museum.

Landscapes of Water is a series of sculpture and paintings that examine the relationship between water and the built environment. They use a combination of three-dimensional marbling and a technique mimicking the natural action of water pressure to create unpredictable patterns and textures in forms sculpted entirely by water itself.

'I am interested in how natural phenomena occur in our urbanised environment; how water always finds its own way to follow its own laws, disregarding the human. In the end we have no control of it, and that is the beauty of this material'

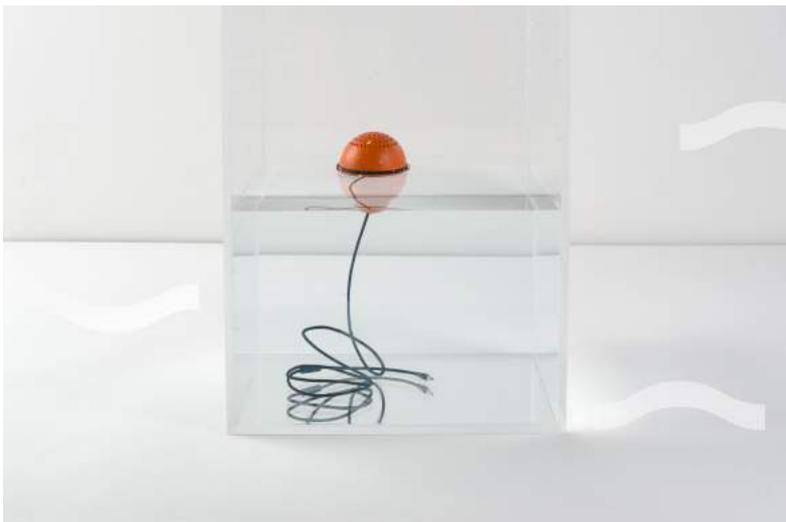
kirsienkovaara.com



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Cloud by James Patmore



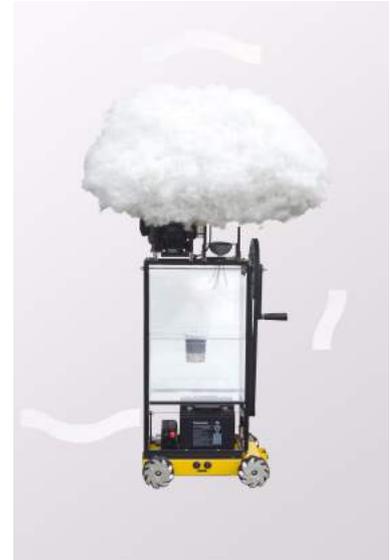
Natural Networks by Six:Thirty and Matteo Loglio



Landscapes of Water by Kirsi Enkovaara



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(Left) Fontanna by Ola Mirecka (Right) Dryver by Philipp Ronnenberg

Ola Mirecka

Polish designer Ola Mirecka graduated from the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw and took her masters degree in design products at the Royal College of Art. Currently based in Denmark, where she works as a designer for LEGO, Mirecka runs her own studio Nej Tak, Farvel ('No Thanks, Goodbye'), creating meaningful products and playful experiences inspired by storytelling, imperfection and spontaneity. Her work has been exhibited internationally.

Fontanna is a handmade and hand-painted interactive ceramic fountain. Hidden electronic sensors enable it to respond to human touch, encouraging the viewer to play with water and explore its auditory properties as an agent of calm.

'I want to explore the motion of water and users' interaction with it. Looking at falling water relaxes your eyes in the same way as looking at fire.'

Philipp Ronnenberg

Dividing his time between Hamburg and London, Philipp Ronnenberg is fascinated by the possibilities of democratised technology, open-source phenomena, making/hacking culture and digital protest. With an MA in design interactions from the Royal College of Art, a computer design degree from the University of Bremen and a degree in digital media from the University of Arts, Bremen, Ronnenberg works in the space between creative design and technological engineering, researching and prototyping concepts for future interactive systems at the intersection between reality and speculation.

Dryver is an autonomous philanthropic robot that condenses water from the air and distributes it to freely to humans. The piece examines both the role of robots in future society and underlines the belief that water should be a free resource, not a tradable commodity.

'Water should be a free good and not something to trade with. By leveraging condensation techniques, we are able to provide free water, gathered from the air around us.'

ronnenberg.io



Simon Denzel

German-born designer set up his Stoke Newington Studio in 2009 after graduating from the Royal College of Art with an MA in design products. Since then, he has brought his innovative approach to a cross-disciplinary range of projects, including furniture and lighting, exhibitions, tech, packaging and retail design. In the past, Denzel has worked with international companies such as Marc Newson, Huawei and Pentagram, and continues to work with a roster of worldwide clients today.

Fenster Farm is a response to the challenge of growing your own food in a densely built-up urban environment. The compact greenhouse is designed to be mounted outside apartment windows, and uses a solar-powered rainwater collection and irrigation system that allows users to harness the abundant water around them to sustainably grow their own vegetables – including a timer system to allow it to function while the user is away.

'The work treats water as a resource worth saving as well as a source of life. Rainwater is a freely, and in this country, abundantly, available resource. The Fenster Farm harnesses it in order to feed plants that, in turn, help to feed people and give them back a degree of autonomy over where their food is coming from.'

simondenzel.com

Unit Lab

London design studio Unit Lab was founded by designer-maker Cindy Strobach and designer-engineer Mike Vanis with the aim of bringing science out of the lab and into everyday life. Having met at the Royal College of Art, the duo launched their studio in November 2015 with the Gravity Ruler – a desktop tool for measuring both length and weight – and have gone on to work on a number of projects that translate scientific theory into physical objects. Alongside its core projects, Unit Lab creates workshops and installations for schools, museums and cultural institutions.

The Domestic Sea Collection is a story told in objects that aims to bring the sensory experience of the sea into the urban home. By subtly adjusting everyday objects to reference the seashore environment – such as an alarm clock that emulate sunrise over the ocean, a rocking chair that mimics the sound of crashing waves and a WiFi-connected carpet that moves to imitate the flow of a particular tide in real time – the collection explores the calming psychological effects that the sea, and water in general, can have on the human mind.

'People who live close to the sea tend to be more relaxed and show fewer signs of depression. Surprisingly, artificial urban water sources such as fountains have a similar effect on people. We will explore whether everyday objects can trigger happiness too, through small interventions in the home.'

unitlab.co



(Left) Fenster Farm by Simon Denzel (Right) The Domestic Sea Collection by Unit Lab



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MAKING WATER

Water is partly funded by the Arts Council. The three London based design studios behind the exhibition are Unit Lab, Dean Brown and Kirsi Enkovaara and it was their fascination to explore the theme Water that kickstarted the exhibition. Water is deliberately uncurated, leaving the designers free to pursue their own visions and interpretations of the brief – making Water one of the most unconstrained and experimental shows of London Design Festival 2017.

WATER EVENTS

Monday 18 September, 7–late

Opening party.

Saturday 23 September, 2–4pm

Adults and children alike are invited to a dry-ice cloud-making workshop within the gallery space.

Sunday 24 September, 1–3pm

Seetal Solanki of material research studio Ma-tt-er presents a talk on water as a making material, followed by succinct presentations from Water's exhibiting designers.

The South East Makers Club presents the Designers Pub Quiz at the Nines restaurant, next door to the gallery.

Water is showing at:

Copeland Gallery
Bussey Building
Unit 9I,
133 Copeland Road
London
SE15 3SN

19–24 September

waterexhibition.co.uk
#waterexhibition



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