

Mutant Matter

Materials and making for our supernatural future

Dutch Invertuals x FranklinTill

17–22 April 2018



Humankind used to take the materials nature offered and make them into something new. Now, there's a new stage in the cycle, as nature takes human materials and transforms them once more. The making materials of today become the mined resources of tomorrow. Plastics are written into the fossil record. Industrial waste steams decay into intriguing new substances. We have entered the **Anthropocene era** – a new geological age where human making has realigned the processes of nature, forever blurring the boundaries between the natural and the man-made.

Experimental design collective **Dutch Invertuals** are collaborating with **FranklinTill** on **Mutant Matter** – an exhibition of radical design concepts and investigations into possibilities of our **new material future**.

Showing at Spazio O' in Milan's **Isola district**, Mutant Matter marks Dutch Invertuals' 18th appearance at the Salone del Mobile, and one of the most progressive and intriguing shows on this year's programme. Bringing together two of the most dynamic and forward-thinking organisations in contemporary global design, the exhibition proposes not just a new collection, but entirely new ways of thinking about what making means in the modern world.

'Geologically speaking, the fruits of the Anthropocene are yet to be witnessed. However, the acceleration of human industry has already made irreversible and permanent changes to the planet, to the point that artificial geological phenomena are being documented worldwide. As a result, designers are beginning to consider not only the complications caused by these vast ecological changes, but also the potential.'

– **Caroline Till**, FranklinTill

'Radical Matter inspires us to observe the drastic evolution of materials. For Milan, we offer our joint vision on a small chapter of this broad and socially involved topic. By envisaging and questioning material innovation we hope to make a real difference on a deeper level.'

– **Wendy Plomp**, Dutch Invertuals

For **Mutant Matter**, **10 Dutch Invertuals designers** each present a vision of how the evolution and mutation of materials might be harnessed to bring about a more livable future. Works include entirely new materials and revaluations of old ones, experiments with recycled objects and repurposed waste streams, and radical new methods of making and thinking about design.

Projects include:

- **Theophile Blandet**'s speculative sculpture explores the changing role and value of 'bad' (nonreusable) plastics such as polystyrene in a sustainably orientated society.
- **Onno Adriaanse** combines the organic and geometric in the form of a table to explore what happens when different materials interact and mutate one another.
- **Thomas Ballouhey** considers ways of tapping lost energy through a solar-powered light installation.
- **Xandra van der Eijk** delves into the processes of corrosion and decay, exploring how the Earth's natural processes reclaim and transform materials over time.



Xandra van der Eijk for Mutant Matter, Milan Design Week



- **Shahar Livne** presents an altar in Lithoplast – a new material she has created from nonbiodegradable plastic and the by-products of mining and masonry – mimicking the geological development of metamorphic rock.
- **Marlou Rutten** explores ways of visualising the invisible, drawing on the potential of elemental reactions to give shape and colour to electromagnetic radiation around digital objects.

Radical Matter at Mutant Matter

In the book **Radical Matter**, published earlier this month, design futures agency **FranklinTill** present a new model of making and material thinking for a sustainable world, examining the maverick ideas and individuals reshaping design, production processes and consumption cycles across the globe. Inspired by the ideas explored in its pages. **Radical Matter** authors **Kate Franklin** and **Caroline Till** have been working closely with **Dutch Invertuals** as they prepare for the show in Milan, acting as bridge between the concepts explored in **Radical Matter** and the designers' creative vision. Throughout Milan Design Week, FranklinTill will be bringing together leading material innovators and international design thinkers for a series of discussions on some of issues examined by both the book and the exhibition – the future of materiality, and new ways of thinking about sustainable design.

Talks will include:

- **Wednesday 18 April – WASTE: A design issue?**
Should design systems be built to eliminate waste or to use it? Should 'waste' even figure as a design term when all materials can be considered resources? In a world of finite raw materials and abundant recyclables, household rubbish and industrial scrap are becoming increasingly interesting as material resources – how might makers and industry work together to tap into them?

• **Thursday 19 April – FREAK OF NATURE: Organic or human-made matter?**

Are today's designers unlocking the power of raw materials, or adulterating them into alien matter that threatens our fragile ecosystem? Does the distinction between natural and human-made still apply, or are we moving into a new age of Frankenstein materials? In the near and distant future, what anthropogenic matter might we be mining and what value could we engineer from it?

The talks programme will be complemented by a series of detailed essays by FranklinTill delving into the issues explored by **Radical Matter** and **Mutant Matter**. In keeping with the themes of both, these will be printed on Extract – the recently launched paper from exhibition sponsor G . F Smith, which is made from recycled disposable coffee cups. The essays will be freely available at the **Mutant Matter** exhibition.



For more information about Mutant Matter, Dutch Invertuals, FranklinTill or the Radical Matter book, please contact; Dorothy Bourne at dorothy@zetteler.co.uk or on +44 (0)7939 200519.

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NOTES FOR EDITORS

Mutant Matter

Location

Via Pastrengo, 12, 20159 Milano – Isola
Near Garibaldi station



April 2018

Opening hours

17–22 April, 10:30am – 8pm (5pm on Sunday)

Press preview

Monday 16 April, 5pm

Talks

Wednesday 18 April, 4pm

Thursday 19 April, 4pm

Launch event

Friday 20 April, 7pm

Curator

Wendy Plomp

Co-curators

Kate Franklin

Caroline Till

Designers

Fleur Hulleman, Fransje Gimbrère, Mirjam de Bruijn, Zwart Frame, Marlou Rutten, Onno Adriaanse, Shahar Livne, Théophile Blandet, Thomas Ballouhey, Xandra van der Eijk.

#mutantmatter

About FranklinTill

In 2010, disillusioned by the flighty, short-term approach of the forecasting industry, Kate Franklin and Caroline Till brought together extensive experience in design, education, research and forecasting to found their one-of-a-kind agency. Today, FranklinTill delivers research-based strategic insight and inspiration to world-leading brands in the lifestyle and design sectors. The company specialises in providing content with context, identifying convergences in sociocultural movements, scientific and technological innovation and public mindset, and communicating its findings via a variety of platforms. Underpinned by Kate and Caroline's expertise in sustainable design innovation, every project sees a studio of researchers, designers and writers working alongside a roster of collaborative talent to create a holistic, positive impact. Always founded on fact, never short of inspiring, FranklinTill's publications, design consultancy, workshops, exhibitions and events, creative content, editorial, art direction, styling and commercial visual strategy have helped countless organisations stay afloat in a rapidly changing world.

FranklinTill's clients include: Caesarstone; the Crafts Council; Channel 4; Curver; Design Junction; Future Publishing; G . F Smith; Heimtextil; Humanscale; Pernod Ricard; IKEA/ Space 10; Samsung; Thames & Hudson; VF Corporation; and University of the Arts London.

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About Dutch Invertuals

Dutch Invertuals is a design company of radical minds in design. Established in 2009 by Wendy Plomp, Dutch Invertuals has developed into a strong brand, well known for its unrestrained creativity. Our activities consist of self-initiated and commissioned projects, not limited by any commercial demands. Within our international network we constantly welcome new talents, who share our unorthodox vision, innovative nature and love for experiment. This enables us to constantly reinvent ourselves and explore new fields of design.

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