

SELECTION
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TALENT PLATFORM 2020

creative industries fund NL
presents design talent 2020

FOREWORD

WHY TALENT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS?

Designers today are tackling a remarkably broad scope of social themes. From Giorgio Toppin, who designs outspoken men's clothing that reflects both his Surinamese roots and Amsterdam youth, to Marco Federico Cagnoni, who is researching latex-producing plants to develop a better-performing bioplastic. They are just two of the 39 recipients who were awarded a Talent Development Grant by the Creative Industries Fund NL in 2019/20. This grant enables budding makers and designers to put extra time and resources into their work and to invest in their artistic and professional development. Recognized designers such as Karim Adduchi, Frank Kolkman, Aliko van der Kruijs, Arna Mačkić, Maison the Faux and Sabine Marcelis are previous recipients of this grant. It enabled them to develop their artistic signature and cultural entrepreneurship. With such illustrious alumni, the future of these new cohorts is very promising.

The hallmarks of an emerging designer's practice are research, experimentation, multidisciplinary, seeking collaborations and developing methods to make their work visible. Initiating multiple projects and formulating research questions are also crucial during their developmental period. The Creative Industries Fund NL makes such endeavors possible by annually awarding grants to more than 30 aspiring talents. In 2019, we launched a special 'scouting procedure' to identify makers who have developed outside of the usual routes of design education. This procedure has contributed significantly to a more diverse and inclusive selection.

The security that the €24,000 Talent Development Grant offers, is perhaps more critical in 2020 than in previous years. Unexpectedly we were confronted with the Covid-19 outbreak, which posed additional challenges for this group of young talents, especially in presenting their work to the public. Given the importance of such presentations, the Fund offers a platform in MU dur-

ing Dutch Design Week titled 'Talent Tours', online via our Talent Platform, as well as with this publication featuring the 39 young makers and designers, all recipients of a Talent Development Grant. Thanks to extra funds which further bolster the creative potential within the design sector, generously made available by Minister Van Engelshoven of the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, this was the largest group we have supported over the course of a year. We shall continue to offer our support with great enthusiasm for the years to come.

We hope that you enjoy these portraits of 39 extraordinary talents.

Syb Groeneveld
Executive Director
Creative Industries Fund NL

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INTRODUCTION

TALENT DOESN'T EXIST IN A VACUUM

Talent is plentiful. Every year, around 200 young designers submit their portfolios for a Talent Development Grant at the Creative Industries Fund NL, which is far more than we can approve. Hence, our selection must be rigorous. The applications cover three main categories – design, architecture and digital culture – which can be further divided into many sub-categories, from social design to garden- and landscape architecture, from bio- and food design to scenography, and from interaction and information design to interior, spatial and exhibition design. The categories for design keep on branching out. For example, one of the emerging sub-categories is design research. Last year's applications encompassed 27 sub-categories. While the selection process is not an easy task for the advisory committee, it is certainly an interesting one. The Talent Development Advisory Committee is the largest within the Creative Industries Fund NL. Each member must oversee several sub-categories. The selection takes place in two rounds: the first focuses on portfolios, the second on development plans. What has stood out for several years is that architecture and product design lag behind in the portfolio selection. Apparently, it is more difficult within these disciplines to develop and position yourself as an independent talent and to convincingly articulate this in a clear plan.

An exciting development of 2019's selection was the scouting process that complemented the first round. We asked Marian Duff and Meryem Slimani to find ten promising designers who have become creative industry professionals outside of formal academic education. Those selected were given the opportunity to make a pitch to the jury. The fact that these talents were able to share their stories and ambitions on stage, added an extra dimension to the first-round selection process.

The scouting procedure's main aim was to increase diversity to create a more inclusive selection. Although diversity in itself does not guarantee inclusion – as one of the committee members rightly pointed out – what quickly becomes apparent are the complex intersectional inequalities and privileges. This applies both to the application process, with many applicants coming from either the Design Academy Eindhoven or the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, and to the backgrounds of the designers we invited to make presentations. For example, in the regular process, candidates from Asia, especially China and South Korea, apply via the academies, but hardly any black designers do. And the proportion of MBO (vocational training) graduates is practically nil, despite there being many creative MBO programs.

The effect of this attempt to be more diverse, inclusive, and to make up for lost ground is that, as well as blind spots, topics such as gender, identity, colonialism, decolonization, racism, and bias – whether conscious or not – come to light more quickly and are taken into consideration and discussed. The same applies to the privileged positions of some applicants, and also committee members. Using terminology alone is not enough; it is necessary to think it through and apply it to achieve systematic change. A great deal of effort is required. However, if all those involved keep striving for equality, inclusion, transparency and openness for everyone, we shall continue to make progress.

When it comes to selection, artistic quality is, of course, paramount. Every development plan must be artistically robust and show promise within its sub-category, the design field and society as a whole. Talent doesn't exist in a vacuum. Talented designers relate to the world, get inspired and take a stand, and find ways to translate and communicate their focus. Accordingly, designers professionally contribute to their field while establishing a meaningful position for themselves. Demonstrating this is easier for those who have worked independently for one or two years and are open to coaching and collaborations outside of their network, or even outside their discipline, than for recent graduates – with exceptions, of course. Exemplary work and working methods are also critical selection criteria. Recent graduates find this especially challenging to prove, as they assemble most of their portfolio during their studies. Consequently, we often only approve applications after the second or third attempt. However, the benefit of such persistence is the continual improvement of one's portfolio, development plan and signature style.

As the committee chair, I should like to emphasize that the Fund is there for all talented designers

in the Netherlands. I want to encourage every young professional, regardless of education, background or discipline, to submit a comprehensive application. Experience this process. It helps to form a picture of your abilities, ambition and position. And even if you're not successful, at least the process sharpens your self-awareness and provides a foundation upon which you can build further.

Angelique Spaninks
*Chair of the Talent Development Grant Advisory
 Committee*



Photo: Harm Hofmans

'Visual Stretching', Body.coding workshop at the Angelaschool in Bostel

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ALVIN ARTHUR

Momentum. Something designer, performer and educator Alvin Arthur is sensitive to. If the timing does not feel right, then he will not take it any further. This year it was a challenge to find a balance between what was possible and what was not, in order to remain both productive and healthy. The intended collaborations with other professionals did not go ahead for various reasons. However, it seemed like the time was right for his education project 'Body.coding'; programming with the body.

Body.coding is one example of Arthurs movement and body-based approach, also known as kinesthetics. His goal is to ensure that children from a young age realize that many things they see in their everyday life are digitally programmed; from the production of a chair, the construction of a building to even the development of a city. And that all of this is carried out by adults, who usually sit silently behind a desk, however there are alternatives.

For his children's education program, Arthur has developed a choreographic language; drawings in basic geometric forms and colors that show children how they need to move in order to depict a symbol. This, eventually, will allow them to program an entire sentence. Group dynamics are incredibly important. Those who quickly catch on are usually those who are able to explain this new language to their peers in a way that they understand. There is also room for imagination; what is the meaning of the choreography they have made together?

With help from the school network of the Eindhoven presentation platform MU, Arthur has hosted a number of workshops for various age groups in order to test and further develop his methods. In the new school year these methodologies will become widely available, allowing schools to work with this program.

Bringing movement into the classroom is vital to Arthur. 'The minute we sit a child down in a chair a great deal is lost. It's convenient for us, but it has long-term effects.' Arthur is convinced that children are not given enough skills to meet the challenges of the world. 'I think that many of the struggles we face as a society, globally stem from the fact that we do not know enough about ourselves, as we are not able to fully experience our bodies. This is the reason why I do this, so that we can learn more about ourselves by learning more about our bodies.'

'If the timing isn't right, I will not take it any further'

'The minute we sit a child down in a chair, a great deal is lost'

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ANNA FINK

Austrian landscape architect Anna Fink investigates life patterns in specific landscapes and how they continually interact. She wants to unravel and strengthen this relationship, which she calls 'topographic life'. Fink does this by giving new meaning to the everyday location-bound customs and cultural actions with which we form the landscape.

Her new venture 'The taskscape of the forest' follows on from her graduation project 'Landscape as house'. It takes us to Austria where, together with her family she owns part of a forest. Through active fieldwork, she examines the personal actions and activities essential for shaping the landscape and preserving the vitality of a place. How do we shape such a plot? What informs the choice of maintenance, planting or harvesting trees or letting the forest take its course? Fink asks herself these questions, just as forest rangers or other owners of forestland. 'My goal is not to judge. I want to ask questions, overturn assumptions, to initiate dialogue regarding the different ways of interacting with the environment, how one defines nature, and what it means to live in a landscape. This is different from walking or cycling through the landscape because then you only consume. You limit the meaning of nature to something distant; to a concept.'

Given her need to research and develop a method, the past year seemed like the perfect time to set up her interdisciplinary design and research studio. It is aptly named Atelier Fischbach, after the place where Fink grew up. She also initiated a summer school in Austria. For the workshop 'Inhabiting wilderness' she works with Dutch designers and local craftsmen. In a riverbed, they build 'topographic furniture': subtle and transient interventions in the landscape that temporarily shape or mark their presence. The oven builder does not make an iconic wood-burning oven like everyone in the region, rather an outdoor furnace that disappears at high water. The loam builder's stamp-loam floor dissolves into nothing after a few rain showers. 'The physical work and our constant presence at the river create a connection with the place. There is room for dialogue from a shared experience called "embodied knowledge".' Fink documents her research through photography, a film and a series of small books.

'There is room for dialogue from a shared experience'

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'My goal is not to judge'



'Parable of Mehr', installation at the Sharjan Architecture Triennial 2019 in cooperation with Samaneh Moafi

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ARVAND POURABBASI

Arvand Pourabbasi graduated in Interior Architecture from the KABK. Over the past year, he has been studying the concepts of 'comfort' and 'exhaustion'. He believes being productive has a romanticized image that ignores fatigue, procrastination and anxiety. Rather than leisure time being a moment for rest and comfort, it falls within a capitalist logic. According to Pourabbasi, it is a time to recharge before quickly returning to work and maintaining a given level of productivity. He also analyses the meaning of work. Burn-out isn't so much caused by physically demanding labor; it is an exhausting effect of sedentary work on office employees' bodies. Within these contexts, 'home' is where exhaustion and comfort are intertwined.

'I want to raise awareness and envision a different future'

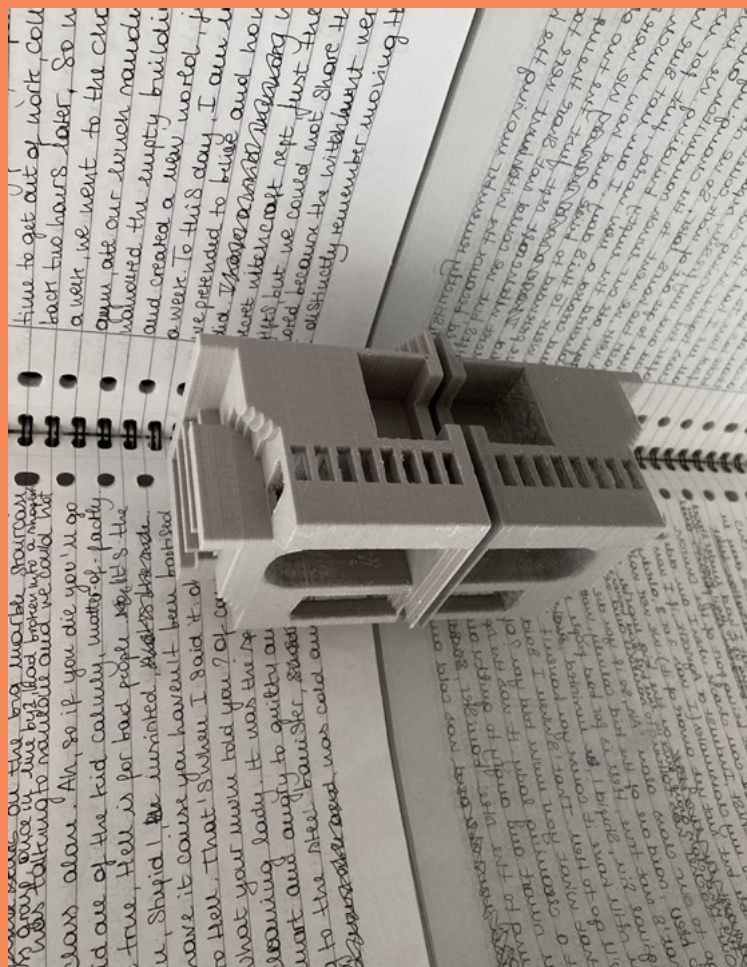
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Pourabbasi runs his studio, appropriately named WORKNOT! with Golnar Abbasi. They shed light on the extreme conditions that shape our society. WORKNOT! curated the collective project 'Fictioning Comfort' out of the need to explore the concept of comfort in a way that transcends artificial or artificial capitalist ideas. Socio-political artists showed their work in relation to different customs and approaches concerning 'comfort'. This ranged from installations, performances and historical research to science fiction, image production and performative objects. 'The meanings derived from the concepts are very diverse. They are about the exhaustion of the body, the land and politics. Such a project helps me to apply new layers to my work.'

To delve deeper into the subject, Pourabbasi spoke with various professionals during the development process, including physiotherapists, psychologists and designers, especially Bik van der Pol who helped him to curate the show and formulate the complex concept of comfort and exhaustion. Discussions with design studio Refunc, who specialize in 'Garbage Architecture', helped Pourabbasi to develop a carpet for use in presentations and discussions concerning his areas of interest. Pourabbasi considers carpets to be the most basic product that signifies both comfort and homeliness as well as a sprawling landscape.

He will collate the outcomes of his research into a publication. 'Drawing conclusions or giving unambiguous answers is not my goal. I am not a problem solver. I want to put the pieces together, and in this case, a publication is the vehicle. It will be an important document for raising awareness and envisioning a different future.'

'Being productive has a romanticized image'



'Am I still an Architect'

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CHIARA DORBOLO

Although she is trained as an architect, building as much as possible is definitely not what she strives for. Chiara Dorbolò's focus is on the question of what it means to be a contemporary architect. Traditionally, a building constructed based upon your design is perceived by many as the most rewarding part of the job. A significant measure of success is the number of buildings that have been constructed under your design guidance. However, for the younger generation this is different according to Dorbolò: 'Many architects in my peer group are working at the edge of the discipline and are engaged in the ethical responsibility that this profession carries. They do not want to commit to a profit driven system where there is little or no space for other motives and values.'

Dorbolò works at the cutting edge of spatial design and social science, something that she became interested in during her graduation project at the Academie van Bouwkunst in Amsterdam. Here she carried out research into the role of borders in migration patterns centered around the Italian island of Lampedusa, one of the most important arrival points for migrants crossing the Mediterranean Sea from Africa to Europe. 'I became aware of the extent of the social issue and realized that it wasn't a matter of simply designing a solution to a problem. Since then I have become much more involved with research and I started to write more and more about architecture and urbanization, including pieces for Failed Architecture and Topomazine.com. I also started teaching architectural theory at the Rietveld Academy.'

This year Dorbolò has developed her expertise in storytelling and creative writing through workshops, coaching and professional work. She focused on assembling a publication containing a collection of stories paired up with follies – architectural structures without a specific function. Additionally, over the course of the past year she has published numerous articles and essays and collaborated on various projects exploring the intricate relationship between storytelling and architecture. The fact that she does not reject the designing of new buildings is demonstrated by the successful participation in a design contest for a large housing complex in Milan together with a group of other architects. Dorbolò contributed to the preliminary research, the concept and the storytelling in the proposal that won first place. 'Stories on Earth' is another project where she is exploring the possibilities of combining creative writing and design. Together with Failed Architecture she mediated a collaboration between professional designers and writers. This project will be presented in 2021 at the Biennale of Venice.

'I write stories through spaces, and design spaces from stories.'

'Building is not my main goal'

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serves him right.

'Serves him Right'

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CREAM ON CHROME

Having graduated from the Design Academy Eindhoven in 2018, Martina Huynh and Jonas Althaus went on to form Cream on Chrome, a partnership which carries out research into the social impact of technological developments. Their interactive installations, presentations, videos and digital tools primarily pose questions such as: what is a meaningful relationship between humans and technology? What are the consequences of our dependency on devices? And who is actually responsible for the problems associated with technological progress?

One project that specifically addresses the latter question is 'Proxies on Trial'. 'Complex global issues like climate change or the current pandemic can get stuck in abstract discussions,' Huynh says. In order to make the conversation more concrete and give us a sense of control, the duo decided to press charges against everyday objects. Three different lawsuits take place in a 'whodunnit' video: a sneaker is arrested and prosecuted for global warming, an alarm clock is accused of causing traffic jams, and a face mask is on trial for not showing up in time to prevent infections. The fictional debate between prosecutors and defendants raises questions about mutual blame and the search for scapegoats. The decision to accuse objects (instead of people) is meant to prevent the jury from being biased.

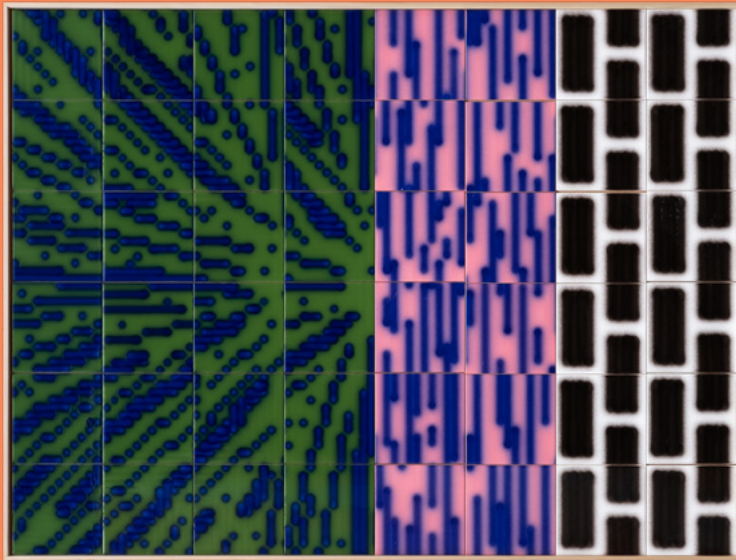
Huynh and Althaus enjoy exploring the origins of established systems, consulting different philosophies, from Bruno Latour and Ubuntu to the ancient Greeks. With their Lab of Divergent Technologies, they turn the relationship between humans and technology inside out. Assuming that everything designed is a reflection of the creator and their zeitgeist, Cream on Chrome presents alternatives based on other philosophies and beliefs.

For example, they take a closer look at common, well-established concepts – like the clock. Our entire society is organized around the idea of linear, measurable time; a notion that was simply agreed upon. On one hand it's very efficient, but at the same time, it limits our freedom. What if we decided to use intuitive time instead? 'Today's technical applications often make users feel powerless. We like to create different designs that require more personal responsibility,' says Althaus. 'With our installations, we want to inspire the audience to rediscover their own role.'

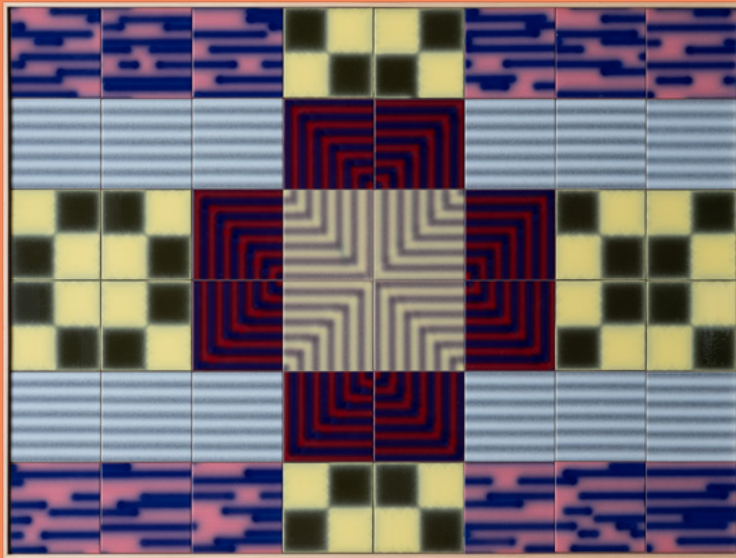
'An alarm clock is the perfect scapegoat'

'We want to inspire the audience to rediscover their own role'

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Ceramic tile compositions presented
at Unfair, Amsterdam



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GILLES DE BROCK

With the help of YouTube, Gilles de Brock taught himself how to make hand-tufted carpets with wild, colorful patterns. Encouraged by his success he thought that something similar might work with ceramic tiles. Although printed tiles already exist, the specific glazing properties he had in mind disappeared during the manufacturing process. So, what did graphic designer, art director and creative coder Gilles de Brock do? He built his own ABCNC (AirBrush Computer Numerical Control) machine, explaining: 'Whatever I didn't know, I learned from YouTube videos.' Once everything was working, De Brock spent a few days at the EKCW (European Ceramic Work Centre) working with Koen Tasselaar and Jaap Giesen on the composition and behavior of the glazes. 'I eventually realized that I should rely on experts for the craftsmanship, and do the rest myself online.'

De Brock can now print tiles exactly as he intended but, this didn't happen without a fight. It took two years to get the machine to produce shiny glazed tiles, instead of pieces of junk. The tiles are fascinating because of the alienating effect they have on viewers. At first, they appear to be handmade, but upon closer inspection they are far too perfectly formed for that to be possible. There's something slightly psychedelic about the distinct aesthetic of the pixelated patterns and colors with a glaze that resembles car paint. The initial results were displayed at the Unfair art fair in Amsterdam, where they hung like colorful collages on the wall, contained within the borders of a frame. It was nice that he sold some artwork, but De Brock definitely doesn't see himself as an artist: 'I'm more of an entrepreneurial applied designer who sees the potential in collaborating with architects and interior designers. I envision a bar in a café or hotel lobby, or furniture and metro stations covered with my tiles.' In Jaap Giesen, he has found a partner who can help him market his new products commercially.

Because of the coronavirus, other exhibitions have been postponed, including one at the Fisk Gallery in Portland (US). The results of his research however have led to a publication with Corners, one of the leading graphic design and risograph printing studios in South Korea, which will also distribute it throughout Asia. Additionally, there will certainly be an exhibition in Seoul in the near future.

'Whatever I didn't
know, I learned from
YouTube videos'

'I definitely don't see
myself as an artist'

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'KABRA', XHOSA 2020

Photo: Onitcha Toppin

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GIORGIO TOPPIN

The art academies where Giorgio Toppin studied did not fully appreciate that his concepts were linked to his cultural background; there was no scope for non-Western approaches and ways of thinking. He was subsequently motivated to make his work public and move beyond academic contexts. In 2007, together with his sister Onitcha, Toppin established the fashion label XHOSA, a moniker similar to his middle name. He wants to offer a more varied and broader choice to young men who want something more in their wardrobe than shirts and jeans. He is proud that he is both from Amsterdam, born in 'little Suriname' (Amsterdam Zuidoost), and a black man with a Surinamese background. 'I mix the two worlds into new narratives. I translate them into collections that blend into the contemporary western context. Fashion that I and my clientele find cool to wear.'

His interest in the Surinamese diaspora and the culture of his homeland led the designer to return to Suriname last year for the first time since he was a baby. Toppin recorded everything and made a documentary to contextualize his research into Surinamese costumes, craftsmanship and techniques. He interviewed artisans about their profession and its development. 'They all gave the same answer: the value of preserving traditional crafts is important and evolves with societal changes. I showed them other possibilities. They were amazed that I translated their fabrics and patterns into a clothing collection.'

He applied indigenous knotting techniques with tassels to a sweater and a hand-embroidered traditional print from the Saramacca district to a winter coat. The creole 'kotomisi', which is extremely difficult to put on, is given a new and easy to wear silhouette. 'In Suriname, the women go to cultural parties in full regalia. Their outfits are passed on from generation to generation. However, this tradition does not apply to men. They rarely get further than a T-shirt and pants. That's a pity.' Therefore, his new collection ensures that men and women, here and in Suriname, have a greater variety of clothing that also adds something new to the street scene. The Covid-19 outbreak meant he could not present his collection during New York Fashion Week, but a launch closer to home is imminent. He also plans to organize viewings for shop buyers.

'Men rarely get further than a T-shirt and pants. That's a pity.'

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'I mix two worlds into new wearable stories'



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JING HE

It should have been a year filled with travel and executing several concrete, ambitious plans. Instead, for Jing He, it has become a period of sitting still and reflecting on her own practice: 'This year I had the opportunity to discover how I can use myself.'

The inspiration for her project plan 'Elysium' was the transformation of her Chinese hometown. 'I can't really prove that I grew up in that city,' she says. 'I don't have any evidence, because all the buildings from my childhood have disappeared.' They have been replaced by modern office buildings and shopping centers. And to give the city some extra appeal, it recently added a life-sized copy of Paris's iconic Arc de Triomphe. It's not an exact imitation, but an adapted design which includes office space and an art gallery.

The idea was to visit this Arc and two other Chinese replicas, as well as a number of other places in China where you could see the imitation and reinterpretation of European cultural history. The practice of copying and identifying formations as social phenomena are often central to He's work. She intended to conclude her research trip with a visit to Paris, 'the original', which would offer inspiration for a series of objects. However, the arrival of the coronavirus, starting in China, threw a spanner in the works. Her trip was cancelled.

Suddenly, there was time to think about an issue that He kept circling back to: how can you translate your research into a social phenomenon into a design, an object, something tangible? How can you make it visual? 'Sometimes an idea is just an idea, but making is a whole different path,' says He. Thanks to advice from former teachers at the Design Academy and the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, she has explored new ways of creating and forming routines. For example, it led her to create objects out of fresh fruit, which quickly decompose. Another discovery was drawing: not purposefully sketching, but drawing as a means to freely generate new ideas: 'That gave me courage, because it made me realize that I don't have to know the outcome in advance.'

Through her drawing and online research, she gained new ideas and insights which have yet to be visualized and materialized. He still wants to continue with her original plans as soon as possible.

'I realized that I don't have to know the outcome in advance'

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'Sometimes an idea is just an idea, but making is a whole different path'



'Sisters of the Wild: Night Flight', with Annabel Reid, costume by Karen Huang

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JULIETTE LIZOTTE

'My fascination with the subversive figure of the witch began at a young age'

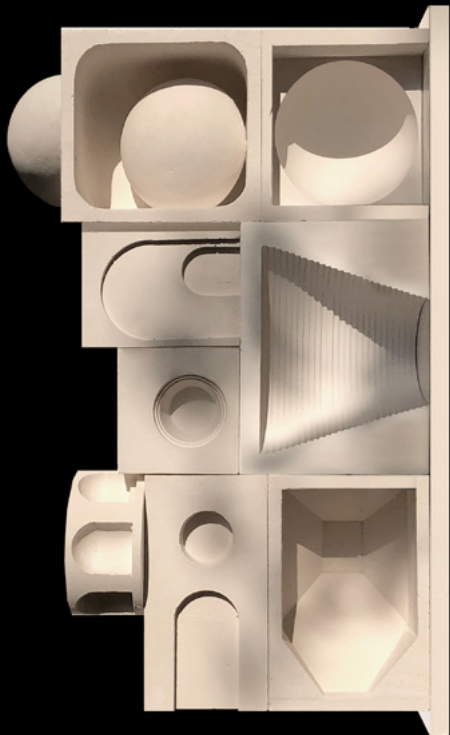
'My fascination with the subversive figure of the witch began at a young age,' says Juliette Lizotte, also known as jujulove, 'but over the years it faded into the background.' In recent years however, her interest returned and has become the subject of her research. Primarily interested in the relationship between witches and nature, Lizotte makes a connection to ecofeminism. This social and political movement stretches back to the seventies and assumes a correlation between the oppression of women and the decline of the environment. 'As a subject the witch is the perfect vehicle for current events. Her evil image is undeserved. The witch is due a modern interpretation; she is actually an autonomous person, a disruptive, revolutionary character who consciously takes her responsibilities towards the flora and fauna around her'.

French by birth and educated at the Sandberg institute, Lizotte wants to revitalize the climate change discussion with her video work and LARP games, a wake-up call to make people reconsider their harmful habits when it comes to the environment. She aims to create accessible work that also draws interest from outside of the world of art. 'I focus my energies on a younger audience. Youth in particular should feel challenged by the climate crisis. However, the subject is sadly quite often viewed as boring and evokes feelings of guilt. Besides, many other social-political questions seem more urgent.'

Last year Lizotte has followed dance-, performance- and writing courses. She collaborated with dancers and theatre makers and with a fashion designer co-created costumes from recycled plastic for the dancers in her videos. She also delved into the possibilities of LARP-gaming and received advice on optimizing her work presentation. It all served a purpose; to give her research more depth and shape and to create a parallel world to inspire others. Due to the outbreak of the coronavirus the presentation of her work had to be delayed. 'Video shoots could not go ahead and have been postponed. But we picked ourselves up; last week we managed to get together for the first time to film, which was pretty exciting.' Lizotte documents her research both online and in a publication.

'I hope that the world I create can inspire people'

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'Placing a work of art in the wrong context creates an incomplete experience'

KASIA NOWAK

The relationship between art and the environment has fascinated Kasia Nowak since she was young. Her graduation project 'Art in Context', which won the 2016 Archiprix, investigated the optimal spatial conditions for art and how they are experienced. The project she has researched over the past year continues this concept, however she has shifted the focus from 'an urban location' to 'a specific location', namely the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. As the curator of her own narrative, she formulates a new and different museum typology: a positive and critical take on exhibiting.

The choice of Museum Boijmans van Beuningen is specific. Since the museum is undergoing a renovation, Nowak sees this as a unique opportunity. She also thinks Adrianus van der Steur's ideas are aligned with her own. 'His designs for the original building took specific artworks into account. For example, he wanted to avoid shadows in the corners of the rooms. Such considerations should happen more often.' She delves further into the architectural context of artworks, focusing on aspects often neglected or even ignored in museums: 'Placing a work of art in the wrong context creates an incomplete experience.' She has found numerous examples where placement, natural light, artificial light, or dark spaces can affect how a work is displayed and interpreted. She spoke to historians and read biographies and interviews with artists, from which it became clear that many artists explicitly state how their work should be displayed. Nowak also investigated where certain artworks have been, whether they were specifically made for a location, and whether they were integrated into the architecture.

The results of her research 'Art in the City' will probably be displayed in the Depot of the Museum Boijmans van Beuningen. For the time being, she is making scale models of objects and experimenting with alternative materials, transparency, shapes and colors. 'It is a privilege to be the curator of your own exhibition that deals with how you can present differently.'

'I view the current way of exhibiting with a positive critical eye'

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Image: Yang-hsi Hsiao

'Grandmom Mom', 2020

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KUANG-YI KU

For his 'Tiger Penis Project' Kuang-Ji Ku won the Gijs Bakker Award from the Design Academy in Eindhoven two years ago. The project presents a sustainable alternative to the use of protected species in Chinese medicine and is more relevant than ever. As the consumption of wild animals in China may have been responsible for a pandemic, the search for an alternative has become even more urgent. 'I have been trying to think of a way to produce artificial bats and pangolins,' says Ku, 'to enable us to preserve traditions and at the same time prevent disaster.'

Meanwhile, temporarily from Taipei, Ku is working on three projects for which he has applied to the Creative Industries Fund NL. As a social designer and bio-artist with a background in dentistry, he designs controversial scenarios for the human body. These are based around health, sexuality and our interaction with other species on the planet. Ku searches for methodologies connecting design and medical science. To keep the context contemporary, he also adds a dose of sociology and politics.

Quite often these scenarios portray an oppressive future which explores the lines of what we perceive to be acceptable. An example of this is the project 'Delayed Youth' which outlines a dystopian scenario where the conservative party of Taipei has removed all sexual education from school textbooks. In that case, why not develop an injection that removes one's sex drive and halts the onset of puberty until a person is legally allowed to have sex – at the age of eighteen? A video shows how uniform the world would look if, up until their eighteenth birthday, people are virtually indistinguishable from each other, including trouser skirts for the gender-neutral youth. The second project explores the ethical aspects of modern-day reproductive technologies. 'Grandma Mom' introduces the idea of surrogacy in elderly women for their own daughters, which allows the daughters to continue with their careers.

The third project on which Ku is working is also based around the concept of sexuality and reproduction. Together with an animal ecology researcher from the VU in Amsterdam, Ku compares an androgynous snail with other hermaphrodites; what is normal for a snail, is abnormal for humans. 'Perverted Norm, Normal Pervert' takes a biological view on discrimination of sexual minorities.

'We like to label sexuality as normal or abnormal'

'I'm pushing the boundaries of what we perceive to be acceptable'

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Photo: Amanda Elisek

'POST POP BLOW OUT', 2020

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LIESELOT ELZINGA

Feminine and tough, with a rough edge. That's how Lieslot Elzinga describes her eponymous fashion label, Elzinga, which she founded together with Miro Hämäläinen after graduating from the Rietveld Academy in 2018. Their love of the stage is evident in their designs. Hämäläinen attended art academy and theatre school, and Elzinga has been a singer and bass player in various bands since she was twelve. 'You have to be able to make an entrance and perform immediately. Our clothing is extravagant but not too much, just enough to make you feel good on stage.' The brand celebrates fashion and music, with simple, precise shapes and heaps of color. The designs evoke the fifties, sixties, Teddy Girls, Pop Art and rock 'n' roll, but anno 2020. And it's very popular too. Elzinga's graduation collection was spotted by Parrot fashion agency, who immediately signed the pair up and introduced them to London's MatchesFashion.

That's when it all started. They had to translate a graduation collection that didn't focus on wearability into a sustainable collection for the commercial market. 'I incorporated PVC in my graduation pieces. At the art academy, however, I never considered the applicability of what I made. This suddenly became important.' The task didn't daunt the duo, and they got off to a flying start. 'Of course, we made many mistakes, but ultimately you learn the most by just doing.' And they did a lot in their first year: the launch of four collections, a presentation at London Fashion Week and the opening of Amsterdam Fashion Week – appropriately at the Maloe Melo blues café.

In between, they carried out research into fabrics at a Spanish weaving mill and worked on their professional business operations. 'Suddenly it's no longer a hobby but an enterprise', says Elzinga, 'We had to consider finances and business management – pretty awful stuff. What's nice is, it's getting faster and faster. The first collection took eight months, the second four and the last only two.' Meanwhile, a fifth collection is in the works, this time no longer exclusively for MatchesFashion. The style has become more subdued. 'Fashion is bound to human behavior. We make a lot of party clothes, but these days there aren't that many parties. That's why the new collection is a bit quieter.'

'Ultimately you learn the most by just doing'

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'Fashion is linked to human behavior'



Photo: Filippo Tittarelli

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MARCO FEDERICO CAGNONI

'Super happy and super tired.' That's how designer Marco Federico Cagnoni feels after a year of researching latex-producing edible plants in collaboration with Utrecht University. He is now one step closer to his goal: a fully biodegradable bioplastic that has all the advantages and properties of synthetic plastic. The twelve months of the Talent Development program are only the start of the material's development. Cagnoni estimates it will take several more years to get 'from the seed to the material.'

Utrecht University allows him to use a greenhouse in their botanical gardens to grow a small selection of plants with potentially high latex yields, such as salsify – the 'forgotten vegetable'. Unlike more well-known bioplastics made from algae or mushrooms, latex (the basis of, among other things, rubber) does not contain cellulose. According to Cagnoni, cellulose-based material does not make a high-performance bioplastic. He was already studying this matter for his graduation from the Design Academy Eindhoven and the development year has allowed him to further research his ideas and hypotheses into practice.

Monitoring the cycle of a plant takes a lot of time; nature cannot be rushed. The corona measures meant he was temporarily unable to take care of the plants, and the harvest failed. Fortunately, he was able to make a chemical analysis from an earlier sample. 'The bottom line is that we discovered a new material that has incredible characteristics and is 70% similar to polyethylene vinyl acetate (PEVA) rubber.' Now they have discovered the 'fingerprint' of the material and know precisely how it is constructed. But there is still a long way to go: 'We have probably found the key; now we must find the lock.'

'We have probably found the key; now we must find the lock.'

The next step is testing the material under different conditions. For the project to succeed, a huge increase in scale is needed: ample growing space and larger machines to extract the latex from the roots or an industrial partner who will commit to the research. Each step is demanding but developing this into a mass-produced material is essential to Cagnoni. As a social designer, his aim is to translate science into design. And not only for the '1%', but also for the benefit of the entire earth and its inhabitants.

'The estimate is several years to get from seed to material'

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Photo: Yen-An Chen
Performer: Alexandre Delasalle

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MARK HENNING

These are interesting times for Mark Henning. His graduation project 'Normaal' at the Design Academy Eindhoven in 2017 marked the start of a period of research on how people perceive normal and the rigidity of our normality. In response to Mark Rutte's remark that 'the norm here is that we shake hands', he designed 'the perfect handshake'. He measured everything down to the millimeter and outlined instructions for a training table to be used when integrating newcomers to Dutch culture – to the point of absurdity. Since then, he has continued to create playful interventions that deal with interpersonal space and the related gestures. In March, his work was displayed at the Philadelphia Museum in the US, as part of the 'Designs for Different Futures' exhibition.

And then the pandemic arrived. Now all of us are talking about 'the new normal'. The world has been turned upside down, which can be a gift to a designer who was already questioning what is normal. Henning is currently rethinking his work. The practice mirror and carefully drawn lines on his training table have made way for something else. While Henning's lines were meant to bring people closer together, public spaces are now covered in lines that show people how to keep their distance. Shaking hands is now out of the question: 'A gesture that is meant to show trust has now become a risk.'

Henning thinks it's surreal. Of course, he's already been observing and playing around with the complexities of social distancing. He's working on an adapted installation for Designs for Different Futures, which will soon move to the Walker Art Center in Minneapolis. The question now is how closeness and intimacy will change. He is especially interested to see what will happen as we re-emerge from lockdown, asking: 'How will we deal with interpersonal space? Will we ever feel safe shaking hands again? What will social interaction look like in six months?' Henning is working on a dramatized documentary that highlights different traditions. 'We don't know how long this process will take, but what if we have to learn it all over again?' If that occurs, Mark Henning's tools will offer us one solution. And then we can all reintegrate, with a knowing wink to what we once considered normal.

'What if we have to
learn our interactions
all over again?'

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'A gesture of trust
has become a risk'



'The Life of Fathers', Adison & Ayani, Rotterdam, 2020

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MARWAN MAGROUN

'You would make a very good father... just like your mother.' On a Tunisian beach, overlooking the Mediterranean Sea, Marwan Magroun's mother explains what it was like raising three children by herself in Rotterdam. Magroun's father wasn't around – something that seems to confirm the stigma surrounding fathers from a migrant background. But in his current circle of friends, the photographer and videographer has had a very different experience. He sees divorced fathers with Cape Verdean, Antillean and Surinamese roots fighting for their children, consciously focused on how to provide for them, and grappling with the question of whether they are doing it right or not. So, to counter the negative image of bi-cultural fathers, he decided to make a photo-series and a film. He explains: 'Since 9/11, there's been something projected on us. I'm looking for ways to combat that. Instead of a prejudiced image of the group as a whole, I want to provide a more personal, nuanced view.'

In his half-hour documentary, 'The Life of Fathers', he follows three single fathers. While he interviews his friends and photographs them at close range, his search for nuance is filmed under the direction of Rien Bexkens. 'We all think in stereotypes,' says Magroun, 'until you get to know the people as individuals. The fathers I spoke to want to see their children, be involved and raise them to be good people.' The film was screened at the IFFR in January and is currently in the running for a variety of international festivals. Magroun's goal is to make more of these kinds of independent productions – he calls them 'meaningful stories'.

His passion for photography began completely by chance in 2012, when he got an old SLR camera from 1967, found among some rubbish on the street. He bought a roll of film at the HEMA (a famous Dutch department store) and started taking pictures of the city where he was born and raised. Four years later, he bought a new camera and quit his job as an organizational expert; in 2017 he won the Kracht van Rotterdam photography prize. He's now scaling up his business: 'I've now reached the level where I can just do what I think is cool. There are still plenty of stories waiting to be told.'

'There are still plenty of stories waiting to be told'

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MAXIME BENVENUTO

Design research. Much has been written and said about it, but what is it really? Or rather, what does it mean? Last year, when Maxime Benvenuto visited the graduation show at the Design Academy Eindhoven, where he also graduated with honors in 2016, he noticed that most of the exhibitors relied on design research. 'But,' he wonders, 'can you really call it that if you've simply read a book as a way to justify production?'. Benvenuto views it more as a discipline that collects intangible knowledge and information, without immediately resulting in a product. Research is never finished, there is no end result, there is only an intermediate state. Therefore, what he is presenting at Dutch Design Week is just a snapshot.

Benvenuto started his own design research – on the practice of design research. He is now conducting in-depth interviews with 17 researchers from the Netherlands, Italy, France, the UK and Japan. They describe the discrepancy between education and practice. For example, a French design researcher at a bio nanotechnology lab had to learn everything from scratch when she started working after finishing her degree. During an interview with a French designer, Benvenuto struggled with the translation of an expression: is it '*la recherche au travers du design*' or '*le design au travers de la recherche*'? So, is it design *for* or *by* research? It turned out that a lot has already been written on the subject – he is currently in the middle of reading discourses by researchers like Pierre-Damien Huyghe, Alain Findelli and Christopher Frayling. 'In practice, it really does matter which preposition you use,' Benvenuto says. Another recurring theme is the subjectivity involved. While most scientists frantically try to remain objective, design research allows for subjective findings. 'That's quite typical', he says. Just like creating interventions to see how people react; design researchers take a much different approach than anthropologists, who want to observe without intervening.

His research on 'the cosmology of design research' is still in progress. It requires depth, which according to Benvenuto, is something that is often missing in design journalism: 'Design has become a fast-moving consumer product, that you should be able to describe in 100 words with a few striking images. But it takes more than that to convey the nuance.'

'Design isn't a fast-moving consumer product'

'it takes more than that to convey the nuance'

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Vernacular design of a sedan chair appropriated for one's own body as a means of transporting a religious object in honor of the goddess Matsu.

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MILLONALIUI

'You see how just one type of crop can affect the land'

Spatial designers Klodiana Millona and Yuan Chun Liu work together as millonaliui. They share a deep interest in alternative ways of living and cohabitation. They are also critical of architecture as a discipline. They consider it to be political, too dominant, canonical and too focused on redundant paradigms that do not meet current requirements for housing construction.

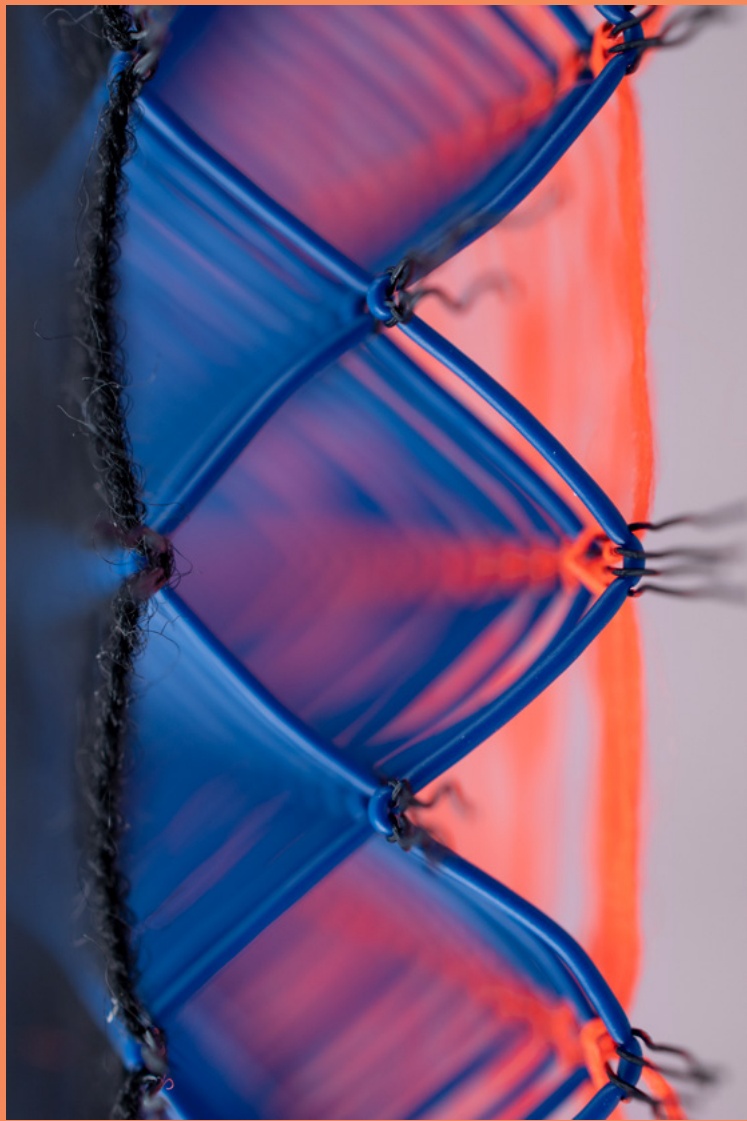
In their development year, they wanted to study two informal housing structures in the capitals of their native countries Taiwan and Albania. In Taipei, residents often add an extra floor to the existing roof. In a city with sky-high rents, these rooftop extensions are usually rented at relatively low prices, thus meeting a need which the government neglects. In Tirana, a completely different phenomenon occurs; here houses are often not finished but are in a constant state of renovation and expansion. This is partly due to regulations: unfinished houses are subject to tax exemption. It is also due to financing: families abroad will often pay for building work, sending money intermittently.

Due to the corona crisis, the research could not take place in Albania. However, millonaliui were able to carry out field research in Taiwan and conducted further research online during the lockdown. While researching its land ownership formation in time and the forces behind it they focused on a genetically modified rice crop that had to be grown for the Japanese market during its colonial domination of Taiwan, with far-reaching consequences. 'You see how just one type of crop can affect the country, the land, the culture, the industry and even the rituals. We looked at how this crop, and therefore agriculture, has had a strong effect on the environment, both physically and socially.'

The designers are currently organizing the information they have collected for an online publication that they will supplement with comparable examples of alternative forms of cohabitation. Beyond the outcomes of their projects, this development year allowed millonaliui to investigate how to make a living from their work and experiment with types of participatory research. 'How do you collect information that does not come from the people who control the information? What does it mean to research a site both with and within a community? What are our own values, and in this field what do we really want to address?'

'How do you collect information that does not come from the people who control the information?'

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Experiment with spacers, in cooperation with Suzanne Oude Hengel

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Photo: Lieke

MILOU VOORWINDEN

During her final year studying product design at ArtEZ, Milou Voorwinden participated in an exchange program with the textile lab at Falmouth University. 'That's when I fell in love with weaving,' she says. After graduating, she continued with her own hand loom and began to specialize in textile design – not only the design but also the manufacturing process itself. She is now a jacquard weaver at EE Exclusives, where she has access to industrial machines with 76 warp threads per centimeter – extremely suitable for 3D weaving. Over the past year, she has taken a deep dive into the technology. 'Normally, fabric is made on a loom, then the pieces of the pattern are cut out and finally, everything is put together. When you weave in three dimensions, it's finished as soon as it comes out of the machine. 'Using this approach, you can make and design textiles locally with a single process,' she says. 3D weaving therefore offers major sustainability advantages: it cuts down on waste, production time and shipping.

Voorwinden joined forces with a designer from New Zealand who is currently working on a PhD focused on sustainable pattern making. Together, they have made a pair of trousers, which have already been woven several times in an attempt to figure out the best results. For example, 'how thick should the thread be and how much tension should the machine put on the thread?' It is not really about the resulting design, but more about the manufacturing process and possible applications. She has also experimented with spacers that could replace the less sustainable foam found in cushions; it is a kind of woven TPU framework that provides a springy, lightweight interior.

'It's actually quite logical to weave clothing in 3D'

In addition to researching high-tech machines in Heeze, Brabant, Voorwinden went looking for the opposite extreme – she went to Japan to rediscover traditional looms. In the silk-making province of Kyoto, she programmed old machines that didn't use a rapier, but instead relied on a shuttle and continuous thread. 'They are often punch-card machines connected to a box that controls everything with a floppy disk,' Voorwinden explains. She found a way to make tradition and innovation work together, by making an old machine work with new software. 'I'd love to go back some time and study it more,' she concludes.

'It's about the manufacturing process and possible applications'

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'(NON)Native', exposition in MU, Eindhoven, 2019

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'How we see nature is
how we see the world'

MINJI CHOI

'In Asia, including my homeland of South Korea, people have respect for every living being' says Minji Choi from her studio in Eindhoven. And that's what her 'The Dignity of Plants' project addresses. She investigates the cultural symbolism of plants in relation to the urban landscape by shifting the perspective to the plant rather than the human. Choi uses the 'dignity of the plant' or the 'rights of the plant' to begin redefining our attitude towards other living things. This attitude is often based on false sentiments and moral judgments about what is good and bad or natural and artificial. How we see nature is how we see the world. By putting yourself in the position of a plant, you can look at nature differently.

Last year, Choi elaborated on this fact with a case study of invasive plants, notably the Black Cherry. Known for its vitality, strength and beauty, the Netherlands began importing these trees from America in 1740. Initially, the Black Cherry was used to stimulate the establishment of production forests consisting of pines. The tree however hindered the growth of the pine trees and began to dominate the forest. The initially admired Black Cherry started to be viewed negatively. Since invasive plants supply seeds to birds and provide shelter for insects and other animals, ecologists are now developing ways to take advantage of them in nature. 'Instead of removing invasive trees, we should protect the ecosystem and boost biodiversity, creating a healthier forest with better soil quality and more balance.'

With the exclusion of invasive plant species, Choi sees parallels with the exclusion of people and the way we treat migrants, refugees or obese people. 'As a designer, I want to share stories with a wider audience and help change our thinking.' Choi has done this through a series of publications, a video documentary, an animated film and interviews with ecologists. She also wants to realize her own 'Garden of Eden' and become proficient in garden design. 'In doing so, I am challenging myself to create my ideal garden, and it only makes my case study stronger.'

'A plant also has rights'

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'Stromende Kracht', experiment with the flow of water

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MIRTE VAN LAARHOVEN

Having taken to landscape architecture like a fish to water, Mirte van Laarhoven does not develop conventional parks or squares. She works on large-scale visions regarding climate adaptation and the restoration of biodiversity. By creating small interventions, she contributes to a healthy landscape.

Van Laarhoven graduated from the Academy of Architecture in 2017. As a landscape architect, her starting point is not controlling or conquering nature, but moving with nature. She gives water the space to flow more freely and investigates better uses of natural processes.

But how do you create artistic landscape architecture that contributes to the existing landscape? One example is her 'Underwater Forest' of deadwood that attracts all kinds of creatures, influences the current, and is a gauge of ecology. She also makes land-art interventions, such as playground equipment or sculpture gardens, which are attractive for flora and fauna but also humans. 'The idea behind it is that you get to know nature through play, by learning to look deeper and interact with everything that lives.'

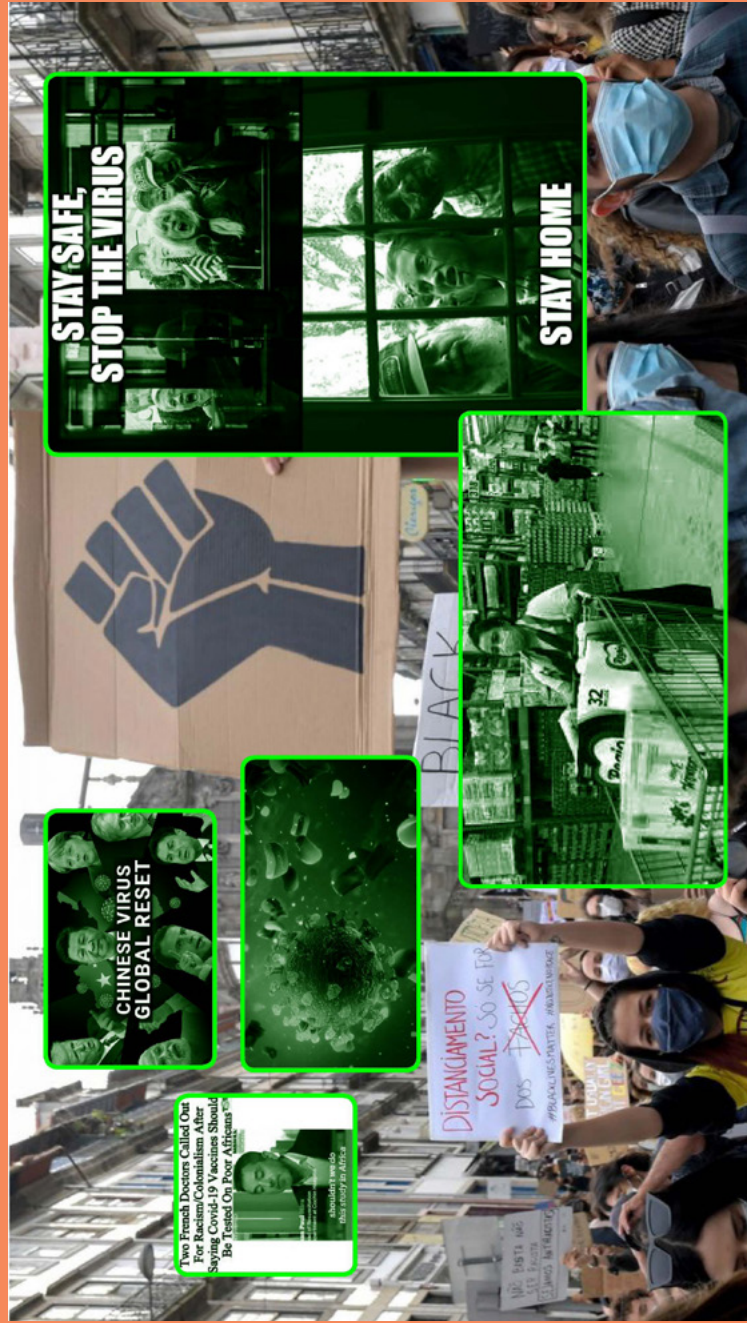
She made significant steps last year and established her own studio: Living Landscapes. She continues to develop her practice and expand her portfolio. The new set of instruments she is developing requires new knowledge and skills. She works with ecologists, artisans and architects to achieve her ambition to realize projects in public waterways. It is not something she accomplishes as a matter of course. 'Government and nature organizations are enthusiastic, but the culture of consultation and the safety aspects make processes slow and policy-oriented. I hope to find a way to realize pilots faster and to test my ambitions step by step amidst the forces of nature.'

'You get to know nature better through play'

Fortunately, her in-laws recently bought a plot of land in Klarenbeek. It is currently dead forest, but the goal is to breathe new life into this former spruce forest, which died due to drought. 'A forester would probably flatten it and replant it in one go, I however am reevaluating the current situation. Revitalizing a forest by myself is not what you would call landscape architecture, but it suits my way of working. I develop a clear vision, followed by an organic translation into practice. This allows me to determine what is needed on-site and deliver something tailor-made. My ideal is a working process that flows like water.'

'My ideal is a working process that flows like water'

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'Projecting Other-wise', research material

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NADINE BOTHA

Research designer and journalist Nadine Botha has always been aware of the role of stories within culture, and not just any stories, but stigmatizing stories based on fear and propaganda. As a conversation starter, Botha uses 'innocent' topics as tools to retrieve and nuance the stories never told about repression, justice and colonialism. She reveals them through archival research, interviews and partnerships with scientists, by displaying the socio-political and cultural value behind the subjects via installations at exhibitions, through digital media, in performances, publications and workshops.

With her ongoing research project 'Sugar: A Cosmology of Whiteness', Botha brings, on numerous levels, sugar into the spotlight – using this sweet topic to highlight the darker side of transatlantic slave trade and the contemporary food industrial complex. Currently, for 'Projecting Other-wise', she is working with epidemiologist Henry de Vries. This project, which is about public health, stigma and viruses through zombies was rewarded with the Bio Art & Design Award (BAD). 'Zombie apocalypse films bring the modern-day myths of society regarding sickness and the dreaded other together,' says Botha. The zombie story originates from Haitian folklore, where it was used to herald the resistance of slaves, and ultimately the Haitian Revolution that led to the abolishment of slavery. Later, in Hollywood films, the folklore was appropriated to signify white people's fear of black people as disease carriers – a preconception that stemmed from how epidemiology was used during the colonial times to justify segregation and genocide. 'Over the years, the films have evolved to show the zombie outbreak being spread by a virus and the fear-inducing zombie horde itself representing the political other of contemporary news narratives, such as terrorism, refugees, the HIV/Aids epidemic and now the coronavirus.'

'I want to question the existing narrative'

How the fear of others is by design something that Botha wants to bring into the conversation, partly due to her upbringing in south Africa and master studies at the Design Academy Eindhoven. 'Racism and colonialism were never a part of any design discussion whatsoever.' This is why she seeks interaction with the audience, to facilitate conversations over subjects rarely discussed. With her work, Botha attempts to make a contribution by sharing alternative, nuanced stories that question the existing narrative and, with it, in time, our understanding of what we take for granted in the world.

'Racism and colonialism were never part of any design discussion whatsoever'

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NASTIA CISTAKOVA

'*Bittere Ernst*' ('Dead Earnest'): the working title of the game in which Nastia Cistakova gently ridicules the 'quarter-life crisis'. 'Too many choices for young people, obviously a very real problem'; Cistakova has the audacity to make fun of the search for meaning – in both text and images. Her graduation project at the HKU was rewarded with the Blink Youngblood Award, for the sublimely uncomfortable feelings that it brought to the surface. The main character in the game she had already created: a pink potato. 'A meaningless shape, representing this whole generation of seekers and their spiritual chaos.'

Over the course of the last year, Cistakova dug deeper into the identity of her wandering potato. Using the internet as her oracle, roaming forums, Googling questions such as; 'How to spice up your life?'. 'Then you get those fantastically dull answers like; keep a dream diary, learn to meet new people, step out of your comfort zone.' Cistakova joyously and freely associated; creating storyboards where she allowed her potato to go bungee jumping, struggle with new encounters or run away from a set of rampaging false teeth. The absurd was exalted into art. In the artist's own words: without any deeper message. 'The idea is more like; how can I make life even weirder than I thought it was? Allow little dramas to go even further off the rails? Now *that* makes me happy.'

The game is not yet finished, since the creative process is also a search for new techniques and methodologies. By now she has improved her drawing skills, taken an interest in animation, video, interactive design and 3D objects. 'Actually, I always used to draw by hand so that I could fix any mistakes in Photoshop later. I have now bought an iPad to learn how to draw digitally, so that I can be finished in one go.'

In addition to commissioned work for, amongst others, De Volkskrant, De Correspondent and Het Parool, where it's mainly about what others experience, Cistakova's own projects are much more focused on sharing her personal story. Keep your eyes open in the coming months for the release of *Bittere Ernst*, for a surprising look into Cistakova's chaotic soul.

'How can I make life even weirder than I thought it was?'

'A meaningless shape, representing this whole generation of seekers and their spiritual chaos.'

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Photo: Nada Zgank

'TANZ', by Florentina Holzinger

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NIKOLA KNEZEVIC

Spatial stage designer Nikola Knezevic devises concepts focusing on the relationship between the mind, body and environment. In recent years he has developed his own methodology; employing techniques from his design and architecture background which involves choreographers and dancers in the design process.

Knezevic, originally from Serbia, has invented his own field, a pioneer without teachers. He considers the award of the Talent Development Grant a recognition of a new discipline that he firmly believes in, one that he is able to master with dedication and patience. 'I want to experience for myself how people move. How does a dancer, stuntman or athlete experience a space? I want to discover how the body reacts or adapts to a space. What is the effect of human perception? And where does the body stop, and the space begin?' He recently put himself in the role of an athlete and learned how to hurdle, together with choreographer Florentina Holzinger. 'I am fascinated by how you can overcome an obstacle, such as jumping a hurdle and make friends with the object. You learn how the object can help you to use it.'

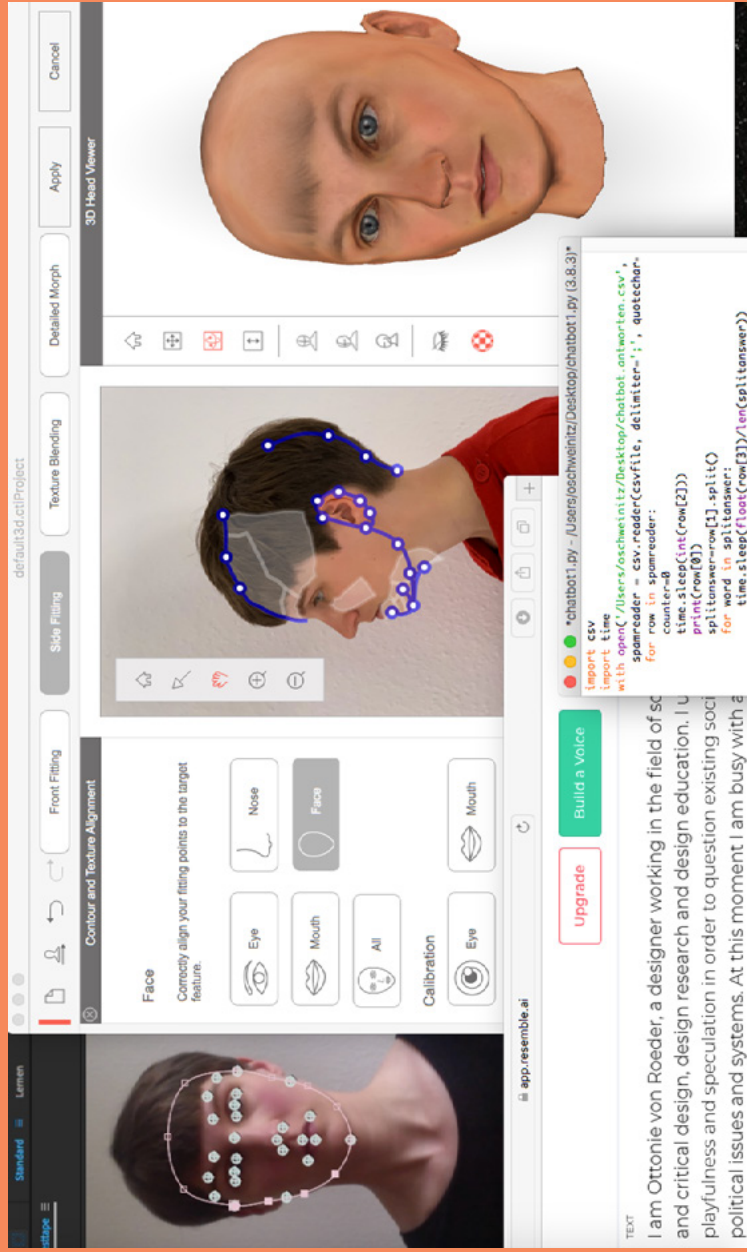
Part of his development process was a Body Weather workshop. This workshop, given worldwide by a group of choreographers, teaches how our body and moods react to the landscape and weather. 'I learned to understand emotions better and to train my body and mind.' Knezevic also studied with the Slovenian choreographer and philosopher Mala Kline, who developed a methodology using meditation to stimulate emotions evoked by images that come to mind. Knezevic's research into the unconscious, memories and dreams also addresses the mental space of spatial design.

Ultimately, he needs to integrate his recent knowledge and experiences into public theatre performances. Because of Covid-19, Knezevic decided to work with artist and programmer Fred Rodrigues on a digital, Covid-proof performative installation that uses VR headsets. This is currently being filmed and is already providing Knezevic with new knowledge.

'I want to experience for myself how people move'

'I want to discover how the body responds or adapts to a space'

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OTTONIE VON ROEDER

'If we are able to redesign the available technology, it becomes something positive'

'Currently I'm in Morocco, where I have just learnt how to weave a carpet.' This is the voice-over of the cleaning lady, who, together with Ottonie von Roeder, built the robot you now see in the video doing her job - all by itself. In Roeders 'Post-Labouratory', the cleaning lady worked on her own replacement, allowing her to take time off to go travelling. As opposed to the suspicion of advancing of technology, Von Roeder created a more optimistic scenario. Following in the footsteps of philosopher Hannah Arendt, she makes a distinction between work and labour, the latter includes the jobs that we would rather not do. If we are able to manufacture a robot specifically for such chores, then one is able to spend the time saved doing something immeasurably more enjoyable.

After graduating from the Design Academy Eindhoven, Von Roeder continued her studies into the transition from labour to work. She noticed that her design peers found her self-made robots an interesting solution for physical professions, but failed to associate the experiment with themselves. 'Designers are convinced, as most people, that their own job could never be automated,' says Von Roeder. 'Computers however, have already become extremely important in our field, nearly everything is created with software programs.' Her design research into the future of creative professions explores the possibilities, but also the sentimental aspects. Von Roeder would like to build a robot that is able to take care of her administration and subsidy applications. Meanwhile, in an effort to blur the lines between inspiring and boring tasks, she is also experimenting with software that is able to design models.

Currently Von Roeder is working on a chatbot for the Dutch Design Week which will question visitors. 'Is creativity a strictly human quality or does a computer also possess this ability? Can we simulate design? If so, will it have the same quality? How will it affect the future of our profession?' Ultimately, Von Roeder aims to trigger and activate the audience. 'Automation is threatening if you look passively at how technology is taking over, but you can also choose to take a more active role. If you are able to master the available technology and redesign it and create something useful, then it becomes positive. I see it as a challenge to turn people from consumers into active participants.'

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'Designers believe that their own work cannot be automated'



Photo: Nadia Morozewicz

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'We decided to immediately break the rules'

PARADYME

Florian Mecklenburg and Karolien Buurman have been repositioning their studio this year; what once began as Goys Birls, has now evolved into Paradyme, Practice for Visual Culture. 'A paradigm is a set of rules that determines how you perceive the world', according to researcher and art director Karolien Buurman. 'We decided to immediately break the rules by spelling the word incorrectly.' The intangible framework of the digital domain keeps the duo occupied. Where the world of images previously was dominated by designers, illustrators and photographers, now anybody who owns a smartphone can be an image maker. Paradyme follows this cultural 180 closely. Their new approach is focused more on design research than on delivering an end product. 'Research and strategy were always a significant part of our design work, but now we appreciate the intrinsic value of the process itself,' says graphic designer Florian Mecklenburg.

Lately, the duo has been dedicating time to search for their place in the world of visual culture and pushing any boundaries that they may encounter. They joined forces with a writer and a thinker for the publication of a series of reports on the influence of visual culture. Not being typographers, they decided to create their own font. 'To not have to strictly follow the rules of typography, feels great,' says Buurman. Their font is called Crop Top and is inspired by the garment which exposes the midriff; an item that down the years has been perceived as a symbol for rebellion against society. They regard it as a character in the broadest sense of the word. The back-story is what piques their interest; 'The crop top reveals social-cultural topics on politics, race, gender and religion.' Extensive research will be followed by a visual publication containing their results.

Another new skill they have learnt is virtual 3D sculpting. The duo has also picked up something tangible and earthy; ceramics – because 'not all solutions are found within the computer.' Currently, they are in the middle of a research project into tactile forms and structures and don't wish to disclose much about the objects that will emerge. In the end that's not what's most important, that's the whole point behind this year's research.

'Not all solutions are found within the computer'

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'BALLOON'

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'We blur the line between reality and virtuality'

POST NEON

Vito Boeckx and Jim Brady were roommates for a few years whilst students at the Design Academy Eindhoven. They graduated in 2018 with respective virtual reality projects, which they worked on in their living room. As Post Neon, they have continued to develop increasingly sophisticated virtual 3D content. And now, childhood friend Jeremy Renoult has also joined them. 'What we do is recreate objects or situations from the real world in a digital form that you can modify. The challenge is to blur the lines between reality and virtuality in such a way that you sometimes no longer know what you have seen. That surreal element is what makes it interesting', says Brady.

As well as being surreal, it is convenient having a database full of digital 3D objects that you can manipulate indefinitely and use in the most unusual places for campaigns, communication and art. They applied for a grant at the Creative Industries Fund NL to increase their technical skills for the various forms of content. Reality cannot be captured in one program: simulating a building is very different from simulating a garment. They needed the latter to assemble digital collections for streetwear brands Edwin and Lores. But they also designed an AR installation for Cinekid and MU, where children could modify a Coke bottle or a flower on their iPad. They also immersed themselves in the visual language of sand – which is part of the self-initiated 'passion projects'. Brady: 'We saw a documentary about sand scarcity. Did you know that at least fourteen thousand everyday objects are made with sand? If the scarcity continues, there will be no more beaches in 60 years – something we wanted to address. The visual language of sand grains is fascinating and inspiring. We are now working with Fontys to make the project a VR experience.'

'Without VR, the outcomes are difficult to describe. We are therefore working on a showreel that summarizes in a few minutes the highlights of Post Neon's first year. We hope it will also feature the 3D work for Ronnie Flex's new album, which was an assignment from record label Top Notch. Ronnie has put back the release, so we can't say too much about it just yet. But we were responsible for the creative direction and production of the entire album's virtual content.' Each track will feature work by Post Neon on Spotify Canvas: music to listen to and watch.

'Simulating a building is very different from simulating a garment'

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ROSITA KÆR

Artist Rosita Kær (28) is working on a series of ongoing projects in collaboration with her grandmother, Karen-Hanne Stærmose Nielsen (87). Her grandmother's textile collection was the starting point of her ongoing research. The collection was sold in 2018, and, as a result, has been disintegrated.

What does it mean when a collector or collection disappears, and what creative possibilities does that offer? This is one of the questions Kær is focusing on. Her grandmother's eclectic collection included everything from Bronze Age textiles to pieces of broken or worn out fabric that others might consider rubbish, however she saw potential in all of them. The fact that her grandmother wanted to get rid of the collection because of her advanced age was at first difficult for Kær, because the pieces had been such a big part of her grandmother's life. They were as precious, intimate and personal as a second skin. But the project is also about letting go, about friendship across generations, between two women – one who is at the beginning of her life, and another who is nearing the end.

As a weaver, Kær's grandmother knows everything about yarn, spinning and all kinds of textile techniques. While Kær says that she isn't that interested in mastering the techniques herself, the grandmother and granddaughter have a lot in common when it comes to how they approach the material. She says: 'We both dive into the different layers, into the details, as if we were archaeologists. We look at how things are made, fall apart, and are repaired. For my grandmother, a weaving flaw in a piece of textile has more value than a flawless piece, because the mistakes give you a glimpse into the thought process of the maker. I also prefer holes and slight imperfections.

An archaeologist looks for fragments that, when combined, make a story more complete. But there are always still missing pieces. I'm only interested in partial and slippery conclusions.'

In the past year, she has also had conversations with curators, archivists and artists about how they interpret collections. Eventually, Kær will present her own research in an exhibition in which her interest in textiles, ceramics, spatial design, text, archaeology and museology will come together. In the exhibition and accompanying publication, the recorded conversations she has had with her grandmother over the past four years, will be the thread connecting the objects she will exhibit.

'There are always still missing pieces'

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'We look at how things are made, fall apart, and are repaired'



'Parallel Botany'

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'I look at the value of imitation pearls and fake plants'

SAE HONDA

Lush green gardens filled with ferns, Japanese blossom trees and two precisely aligned deer. Ivy, a pot with blooming hortensia's and a fat panda bear. These small artificial landscapes are exhibited at the showroom of the Chinese factory in the Guangdong province, where artificial plants are produced. Jewelry designer Sae Honda visited various factories during her research project 'Parallel Botany' to investigate the materials used and their seemingly life-like appearance. Here she studied the manufacturing process of the fake plants and flowers. 'It's crazy, just like a science fiction film.'

Like a somewhat contemporary archaeologist Honda questions our current value systems. In her interdisciplinary practice, which aside from jewelry includes objects, installations and publications, she is less interested in the monetary value but rather focuses on the intrinsic value of an object which is found in the attention it is given and how it is treated, regardless of whether it is fake or real. This also applies to Honda's previous project and publication 'Everybody needs a rock' (2018) as well as the artificial plants. 'I don't wish to promote artificial plants but rather to draw people's awareness to what I call "fake nature". We place less value on these man-made products, but this new fake nature, carefully reproducing the nerves, shadows or raindrops has a value of its own. This craft of faking is fascinating to see. There are so many industrially produced plants where the human touch is clearly visible.'

Honda also investigated the potential of imitation pearls. For her project 'Faux Pearl' she travelled to her homeland Japan where she visited small factories and workshops in Osaka. These places have small-scale production runs where the fake pearls are made by hand and coated with pearl essence. In collaboration with one of these companies and employing their techniques, Honda was able to experiment with shapes other than the classic round bead.

In order to refine her business, start a jewelry label and find the right sales channels, Honda brought in the expertise of Sarah Mesritz, co-founder of the jewelry platform and magazine Current Obsession. In this way she hopes to find shops for her reproducible collection of custom artificial jewelry, made in Japan and assembled in the Netherlands.

'The art of faking is fascinating to see'

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'Where Neon Goes To Die', Miami

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'I would like to transcend the street-art label'

SAÏD KINOS

Large, colorful murals and artworks reveal street-art artist Saïd Kinos' background in graphic design. Within his design practice Kinos makes use of collage, paint and assemblage techniques that result in works where the closely placed and overlapping fragmented typographies create the illusion of depth. The way in which people communicate; language, symbols, (social) media and the overload of information are his biggest sources of inspiration.

Kinos makes autonomous works for museums and galleries as well as commission pieces. Last year he created three murals at Art Basel and Art Miami which led to an assignment for a mural at a hotel in Okinawa, Japan. The 'Talentontwikkelingsbeurs' (talent development scholarship) gave him the financial freedom to focus on his work and the headspace to think about how to expand his practices on the international stage and to further develop from a content perspective. 'I would like to transcend the street-art label and present myself more as a contemporary autonomous artist who is able to create work accordingly,' says Kinos from his Rotterdam based studio.

The artist also wants to expand his spectrum. In order to give his work an extra dimension; to bring his paintings to life, Kinos has developed his skills in VR, animation, project mapping (a technique that allows you to project a moving image onto a wall) and AR. 'My approach is no different than that of my two-dimensional work, but with an added technical dimension. I would like to master all these forms of digital media, to allow for better communications between myself and the programmers I prefer to work with.' This involves attending online courses in animation and a work visit to the Argentinian-Spanish street art-artist Felipe Pantone, who also broadened his media horizon.

All this Kinos brings together in a large, spacious installation. Inspired by the 'Infinity Room' by Yayoi Kusama, the artist visualizes large-scale works printed on plexiglass surfaces arranged in a row, whereas the rest of the room has been covered in mirrors, allowing the visitor a walk-through experience. In order to realize this, Kinos is constructing scale models, sketching plans and building prototypes. The artist has already presented an installation at the POWWOW! festival in Japan, however due to the pandemic, Kinos has had to rethink his strategies. The Showbox, a company that displays artworks and installations in empty shop windows in Rotterdam, has asked Kinos to participate; the perfect opportunity for a tryout of his installation.

'By implementing digital media, I can add an extra dimension to my art practice'

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11.11.20
20:00 - 21:00

In it because I thought it was a limit.
The first one we watched was about the relationship I am planning to see him even from last night.

Even if it was artificial intelligence and human culture are becoming essential players in the world. I tried when I was feeling bitter comparing with my boyfriend.

He also told me that I should be responsible of in this planet.
I think I am really excited to see you really.

Also now, I feel and what I was holding back a coat started to think the environment.
you grow up can solidify your personality.

When I saw him, I could go to my friends as well.
So I was really excited to see you really.

And let's see how the creative activities of the car road.
he did not want to give them paths me out of the book in the pleasure of the

Shaded and fell on my way.
When hearing this, I thought of the car roads. I had a quick mulling.

Anyway, I took a bus to go back the way I was feeling terribly up in the mood.
But I just heard that the personality is finally solidified at the same time I was

relieved to see you really.
I think I am really excited to see you really.

In the train station, I went up to the hospital, looking at me with
a ferry and go back to the station.

It is not anymore important in this world.
And I really appreciate the meaning of the work.

I cried when I was shivering all day.
Even if it was not really focused at the age 21, so I rather cloud to read stories of

others 21.
Before I go to office.

Then, I started to smell like a dream to be with English subtitles.
But still, I just appreciated the meaning of the work.

Even if it is only part of the work.
At the same time, I just decided to buy it in English.

After I began cleaning, I started the source of the cry.
Like the eggs were.

'I work with a poet disguised
as an algorithmic author'

SEOKYUNG KIM

Seokyeong Kim loves illustrations, poems and writing. The project 'Alternative of Alternative Literature' which she has been working on for the past year is inspired by a poem from her diary, something she began writing in when she started her studies at the Design Academy Eindhoven in 2014. Her projects focus on the algorithms in human speech, including automated translation services such as Google Translate, Markov chain (a mathematical system that moves step-by-step), voice recognition and automatic correction. 'Alternative or Alternative Literature' is in a way the follow up to her graduation project 'The Trace of Sorrow', a book about sadness, written by an algorithm based on eight hundred poetry collections and novels including works by Tolstoy, Brontë, Joyce and Kafka. Kim shows that even though algorithms have no emotions or brains, through our input they are able to develop an unexpected use of language.

For her most recent project Kim worked together with writers and critics and made use of a Markov chain. 'Because the system tried to imitate my style, the end result was randomly translated content, seemingly written by a poet disguised as an algorithmic author.' Out of interest in the ways in which machines both limit our creativity and thought processes, whilst at the same time strengthening our imagination, and how writers and reviewers responded, Kim took part in an online writing workshop. Here she read her Markov chain translated poem, without letting anyone know. Some fellow students didn't like it, whereas as others called it a new style of writing, comparable with conceptual and experimental pieces in ambient music. Kim also asked Korean writer and critic Young June Lee and Dutch writers Lars Meyer and Martin Rombouts for their opinion on the poem. Whilst one was not afraid to experiment with these alternative methods, the other was resoundingly critical.

'I would like to show that a translating machine has more potential than just fulfilling a practical function. A collaboration between "human" writers and machine algorithms opens up possibilities – not just for fun, but it can also become a fresh source of inspiration previously unthought of by writers.' The poetry created by the algorithms and the criticism from the writers and reviewers, will be presented by Kim in a publication. The text takes prominence, but Kim is also experimenting with graphic design. During the process, she often contemplates on 'the relationship between book designer and author'. Additionally, she is learning how to program to broaden her creative practices and be able to create commissioned interactive designs and websites.

'A translating machine has
more potential than just
fulfilling a practical function'



'Sensory Cartographies'

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'I am often guided by the question: Where do we perceive our bodies to end, and the environment to begin?'

SISSEL MARIE TONN

Sissel Marie Tonn works on the cutting edge of art and design and conducts artistic research and design studies working with various scientific disciplines. This year she won the Bio Art & Design Award (BAD) with her research into microplastics, 'Becoming a Sentinel Species' in collaboration with microplastics expert Heather Leslie, and immunologist Juan Garcia Vallejo, Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam. Amongst other things she is interested in the complex way in which we relate to ecological disturbances in our environment, from microplastics to earthquakes. After moving to the Netherlands, she became fascinated by earthquakes that were the result of human activity. 'In the case of Groningen and the earthquakes that have occurred there due to the gas extraction, I was fascinated by the detailed stories that people living there told me – some even claimed that they would wake up a few seconds before the earthquake occurred. This made me imagine that they had developed an extreme sensitivity to these vibrations in the ground, the same way a bird would fly low and silently in the calm before a storm, or a dolphin heads to shore before a tsunami.'

In the installation 'The Intimate Earthquake Archive' Tonn's research and the personal stories of the Groningen residents are combined with seismic data. The hard data are literally woven into a soft textile vest, designed with fashion designers Gino Anthonisse and Christa van der Meer. Tonn's partner, sound artist Jonathan Reus translated the data into interactive compositions and sonic vibrations. 'In this way, the audience is able to experience man-made geological changes and gain a better understanding of the phenomenon.' The second continuous project, 'An Education of Attention' ties in with this and is inspired by a stay in Istanbul, a place that in the past was subject to numerous earthquakes due to its fault line position above two tectonic plates. In Istanbul she interviewed residents about their experiences and memories, before, during and in the aftermath of these earthquakes and how they influenced their daily lives in this high-risk area. The data retrieved were woven into a textile topographic map.

In order to forward her practices and professional career, Tonn enlisted the help of two mentors; media artist and creative coach Jennifer Kanary Nikolov(a), who specializes in researching how thoughts can influence our body, soul, behavior and consciousness. Her second mentor is design historian and critic Alice Twemlow.

'I want the audience to feel that their bodies are implicated in the ecology I investigate'

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'The Reframing of Being Forgotten'

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'I'm looking for the spark that can bring something to life'

SUK GO

Folklore is not very popular among the younger generation. In times of globalization however, and the accompanying fear of identity loss, folkloric expressions acquire a new value. 'This is how folk music speaks to our roots,' says information designer Suk Go. 'It is often the older generation who try to keep musical traditions alive. However, the strict and old-fashioned way in which they approach this task doesn't always appeal to young people.' Go graduated two years ago from the Design Academy Eindhoven, producing contemporary visualizations of traditional Korean folk music. She chose not to use the standard staves, which very few people can read. Instead, she developed new graphics and installations to make the music more accessible.

After living in the Netherlands for several years, Go decided to study Dutch folk music, which is also disappearing due to its 'dull' image. 'I'm always looking for the spark that can bring something to life', says Go. She found that spark in the dances that accompany traditional Dutch songs. Everyone in the Netherlands can envisage the 'clog dance', but few people know how to do it. To her surprise, there was hardly any information on folk dances in the archives of the Meertens Institute. She scoured the internet, delved into books, talked to music associations, interviewed experts and created an online archive of Dutch folk dance. At moveround.nl you can find detailed information about these dances from the past, from the Afklappertje (Clapper), to the Driekusman, to the Zeven-sprong (Seven Leaps). The website presents the history of these dances alongside videos and instructions. Go made animations that you can follow without the need for explanatory notes. Its animated graphic icons transcend language, culture and age; you instinctively know when to swing, stamp or clap.

There are many clogs to be found on the website. The costumes, however, turned out to be much more varied. Each region or city has its own caps, scarves, aprons, hats and shirts. 'The cultural variation is greater than I imagined,' says Go. Covid-19 has made it difficult to investigate this variation further. After all, folk dancing is a contact sport. She is now working on an installation that projects her animations onto the floor to be able to follow the instructions step by step – even if you have to keep a little more distance than before.

'The cultural variation is greater than I thought'

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Photo: Charlotte Brand

'Concert in A.I. The Promethean Promise'

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'We look at the potential of technology'

TELEMAGIC

Algorithms are the common thread in Telemagic's work. Cyanne van den Houten, Roos Groothuizen and Ymer Kneijnsberg make up this art-meets-technology collective – an open media lab for inventors experimenting with contemporary media and technology. 'We don't look at whether something is good or bad; we look at technology's potential.'

To make the media lab both physically and digitally more accessible, broaden their range and involve other creators, Telemagic are working on tools to share with other artists. One of these is '1 Euro Cinema', a small cinematographic oracle that selects a film for you after you insert one euro. Together with two guest curators, Telemagic filled this 'movie jukebox' with work by more than 40 up-and-coming filmmakers and artists, ranging from short videos to longer documentaries. 'In this way, we offer peers a platform to show their work. It also provides interesting perspectives on how they look at various aspects of today's society.' At the invitation of filmmaker Biyi Zhu, they went to Hong Kong, which resulted in the addition of films and perspectives from outside Europe. China also offers a nice metaphor for the oracle. 'Macau is known as a gambling city; with the 1 Euro Cinema you can bet on a movie.'

Another long-term project is 'Concert in A.I.', which can compose and conduct musical harmonies based on 'AlgoRhythms', a self-learning music algorithm. In collaboration with Valentin Vogelmann, Mrinalini Luthra and Arran Lyon, they philosophized on how a deep-learning algorithm could theoretically create new musical pieces and genres. They designed a tool that they linguistically trained – after all, music is a language you can parse. 'It's exciting that the algorithm creates patterns, using our tool that stores millions of pieces of data. The results are a new part of the musical spectrum that can endlessly reinvent itself. Usually, we listen to a composer's concert. This is the meta-version of all the music in the world.'

Telemagic's Concert in A.I. puts the algorithm center stage. In their magical shows, the designers create varying arrangements where the invisible becomes insightful and tangible. Circles of light and floor projections indicate the notes played and their connection with the instruments. They propose the next step could be an A.I. music label. This autonomous platform would bring together artificial intelligence, musicians and filmmakers.

'The unexpected combinations an algorithm makes are surprising'

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'When the Work is Done', exposition at A-Z, Berlin

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TEREZA RULLER

High in the mountains in the Swiss valley of Engadin, communication designer and performer Tereza Ruller studied, during her design residency, the traditional, colorful, symbolic ornaments, patterns and figures applied by local residents to the facades of their houses using the sgraffito technique. Ruller then translated them into a contemporary digital sgraffito. Over the past year, she has better positioned and professionalized her practice, studio The Rodina. Additionally, as a performative designer, Ruller is exploring topics like body, presence and Non-Western perspectives, a more equitable distribution of resources and labor as well as other ethical issues. She does so by conducting experimental research that combines action, interaction, visual representation and playfulness. Most of her performative designs are visual, but she believes having her own sound is just as important. Accordingly, Ruller collaborated with audio artist BJ Nilsen to create local sounds that accompany her designs.

Together with designer Annelys de Vet, she has also worked on ethical guidelines. These guidelines help Ruller to determine how she is able to work with clients without making ethical concessions. For Vlisco&Co, the Dutch manufacturer of African fabrics, she developed a workshop for young designers from Abidjan, Ivory Coast, where many of the Helmond-based company's factories are located. 'The fabric designs are conceived in the Netherlands,' but she wondered, 'If the young Ivorian designers created something themselves, what would that look like?' Within that framework, for her project 'Investigating Underrepresented Perspectives', she wants to consult experts in the field of social design, such as Myra Margolin. The community psychologist specializes in film and video productions that contribute to social change and empowerment in local communities. Ruller says: 'She helped me realize that when it comes to redistributing resources to benefit the people who need it most, even one designer can achieve something on a small scale.'

As part of her work, she provides the audience with tools like stickers, posters that need to be finished, or a carpet that is a playing field, so they can physically intervene and participate in the design process. 'My goal is for people to contribute to, and become part of the story, to feel it and become playful. Allowing the audience to actively participate in my performances enriches the design process. The outcome is surprisingly different every time.'

'Allowing the audience to actively participate in my performances enriches the design process'

'Even one designer can achieve something on a small scale'

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THOR TER KULVE



'PUSH'

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Despite the pandemic, London-based product designer Thor ter Kulve has been able to execute many of his intended plans in his development year – although sometimes otherwise than initially planned.

Firstly, there was his proposal to make a rainbow machine: an object that can reproduce this wonderful natural phenomenon. And it worked. A four-meter in diameter circular structure sprays a mist of water towards its center. When sunlight shines through it at the right angle, a round rainbow appears – this is usually only visible from an airplane. The rainbow machine extends Ter Kulve's typically playful functional objects into the realm of wonder and 'how you can show natural processes in the urban, the non-natural, and thus generate a bond between people.'

This project dovetails with his interest in the city. We are making increasing demands on limited public space. But who does public space belong to? And what role can design play in this? Ter Kulve's designs are often responses to archetypes and structures within the public domain. He uses interventions to instill public space with different functions that make people think. An example of this is the lever he made during the lockdown. When placed over the button on a pedestrian crossing, it can be operated with the knee or elbow instead of using your finger. Such a device can encourage discussions about hygiene in public spaces.

His deliberations on these issues led to conceptual designs that he realized in scale models. Ter Kulve also made 'romantic' collages, photo compositions depicting a more balanced life in the city. He intended to study photography and video, but the courses were postponed due to the coronavirus. Instead of just showing a slick photo of an outcome, he is looking for ways to communicate his methodology – the process leading up to a new object – to a broad audience. The scale models and image collections he has been making are a valuable way to document his thought processes. They are forms to share thoughts without having to implement them immediately – quite a step for a maker.

'By intervening in public spaces, I want to make people think'

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'Who does public space belong to?'



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TIJS GILDE

Designer Tijs Gilde does not begin with an idea to make a chair, because he believes this limits his mindset. He prefers to experiment and take unusual detours, placing techniques and materials in a new and unfamiliar context. For this design method, Gilde draws inspiration from industrial areas. He likes to work with industrial companies that have no common ground with the design world.

His goal is an interesting, aesthetic and commercial end product. Therefore, he couples his creativity with an economic outlook: 'I work experimentally, but my concept has to provide perspective from the start of the process. Otherwise, I find it too non-committal.' Over the past year, Gilde has continued working on 'Cored', for which he conducted the first experiments during the Envisions exhibition in Milan in 2016. He intended the tests to result in a series of furniture, but now his focus has turned towards lighting. That's how it goes; new ideas and elements keep appearing.

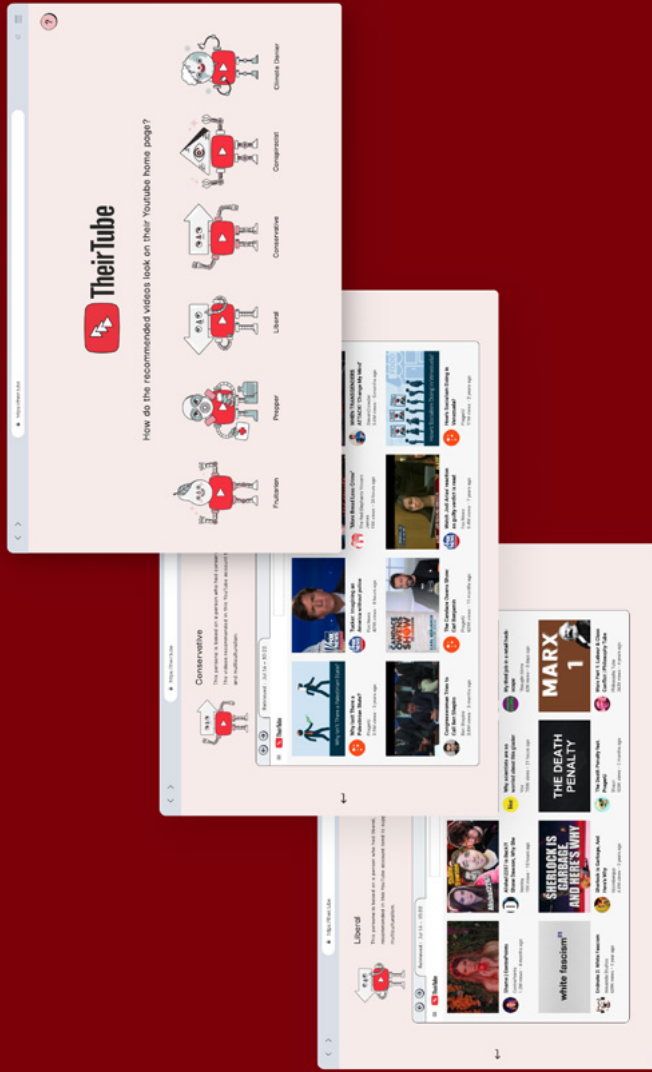
The Talent Development Grant has afforded him the freedom for time-consuming experimentation. For Cored, Gilde researched techniques and materials used in the textile industry, which he combines with other unfamiliar materials. By replacing the core of braided rope – which usually consists of filler material – with another material, he created an aesthetically pleasing lamp that can be hung anywhere. It can also be made in a wide range of colors, patterns and sizes. 'I like mixing up contexts. A rope manufacturer can also make lighting or chairs, which can lend a surprising broadening of a company's market.' This is how Gilde extends his thinking into other unknown worlds.

A well-thought-out presentation strategy is also a vital part of his practice. Unfortunately, a lot has been cancelled. Gilde was unable to show his intended series of Cored furniture at the Salone del Mobile. Because of Covid-19, many industrial companies had to hold back their activities. The money that he would otherwise have spent on showing in Milan however was invested in an internet presentation and a completely renewed website. His astutely posted photos on Instagram during the process were an instant hit. Currently he is working with a major brand to see if Cored can be translated into a range of consumer products.

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'I like mixing up contexts'

'I get inspiration from industrial areas'



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TOMO KIHARA

When a conspiracy theorist tried to convince Tomo Kihara that he was right by using YouTube videos, an idea was born. 'From the moment I saw his home page, it was immediately clear what kind of bubble he was in,' says Kihara, an interaction designer who focuses on the connection between human behavior and technology. He describes how the introduction of artificial intelligence has changed the internet: AI bots predict what you would like to see, and suggest things that match your interests. Other points of view disappear, and the things you were already inclined to believe are confirmed. That doesn't only happen on YouTube – it's also happening on Netflix, Tinder, Amazon and Spotify. On all major platforms, machines use automatically detected personal preferences to determine what kind of information will be presented to you.

Sources of information are always somewhat biased, but if you read The New York Times, you know you're getting something very different than when you watch Fox News. In contrast, recommendation algorithms shape your opinion without any kind of identifiable ideological basis. And in the meantime, they are having a major influence on your worldview. For anyone who is open to a more nuanced view, it's worth taking a look at someone else's home page', says Kihara. As a counterpoint to YouTube, he came up with and developed TheirTube, where you see six different home pages from six different types of people; there is a world of difference. While a 'fruitarian' is seduced by the wonders of a 'hardcore organic life', a 'climate denier' sees proof that global warming is nonsense and a 'conspiracist' is further convinced of his belief in conspiracies.

Kihara is originally from Tokyo and earned a degree in Design for Interaction from TU Delft. After working for some time as a creative technologist at De Waag in Amsterdam, he now works as an independent designer who creates playful interventions that address social-technical issues. The bubbles that we are all part of form the central theme of his work. For Kihara, it's about being open to different ideas from time to time. With this project he accomplished that mission: gaining the 100,000 views he was hoping for within a week of the launch. TheirTube also went viral on Twitter. He quotes the saying 'fish will discover water last' to indicate how difficult it is to be conscious of something when you're right in the middle of it. With this alternative platform, Kihara is challenging those fish to take a more critical look around.

'Other points of view disappear'

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'Algorithms determine which bubble we are in'



'South Korea's Parasite Makes History',
in cooperation with Arno Hoogland, 2020

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'I distort the relationship
between content and imagery'

WARD GOES

Ward Goes lives in Paris, where, alongside his own projects, he works for Dutch clients. This year, for example, he designed his first book: the graduation catalogue for the Design Academy Eindhoven, where he also completed his degree in 2013. Afterwards, he earned a Masters in Cultural Anthropology from Utrecht University. This mix is clearly echoed in his work.

Goes hasn't had time to sit still in the past year. He's been focused on personal development and establishing his practice in a field between visual anthropology, graphic design and journalism. Based on the theme 'objectivity regimes in journalism and public debate', he is examining how he can make a mark on important topics related to the role of media in forming perceptions, balanced reporting, and the changing definition of facts. He explains: 'I'm a news junkie, so I read everything. I integrate that into my work, distorting the relationship between content and imagery. That creates friction. By presenting news in a different context, by expanding and playing with it, I want to inspire debate and encourage people to take a critical look at their sources.'

He mapped out three parallel projects. First, he did fieldwork. His collaboration with furniture designer Arno Hoogland, information designer Irene Stracuzzi and social designer Déborah Jansen challenged him to use different methodologies and processes. Tamar Shafir served as his advisor, helping him to articulate what he wanted, asking critical questions, and providing literature and theory.

Goes also set an ambitious goal to initiate a monthly conversation with an established designer, typographer, researcher or curator to expand his network and better position his practice. 'By forcing myself to have these conversations, I spoke to artists that I wouldn't normally dare to approach, such as graphic designer Richard Niessen,' he explains. He also had critical discussions with Liza Enebeis from Studio Dumbarr and the young French duo from Syndicat about their profession, entrepreneurship and how to make your mark on the public debate.

Finally, to expand his skillset, he learned how to screen print at WOW in Amsterdam. It led to three (political) prints that are part of his final presentation in the form of an installation and a visual essay revealing the outcome of the first two projects.

'By presenting news
in a different context,
I inspire debate'

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RIVERS OF JANUARY



'Rivers of January'

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'I have to make myself invisible'

In February he was back in Rio and followed ten young people around with his camera – they ranged from fashion designers to gang leaders. Anthonio is trying to portray them 'as purely as possible', but is still trying to figure out what the end result will be having already interviewed and filmed the participants. The plan is to put on shows in Rio, Amsterdam and New York next summer. He asked the participants about 'normal' things, like their plans for the future, or what they wanted to be when they grew up. 'It's not only about extremes, we're just having normal conversations. And then it seems that we're not so different from each other.'

As a Dutch person with Surinamese, Moluccan and Portuguese blood, born and raised in Amsterdam Noord, Yavez Anthonio knows the feeling of not quite fitting in. That is, until he went to Rio de Janeiro for the first-time last year for a video shoot. 'I had a pretty stereotypical idea of Rio: samba, favelas, drugs, and beautiful women on the beach. But what I saw was completely different. The youth culture is very mixed there. There's a lot of classism, yet they mix a lot more. They don't make such a big deal about people who are different. I immediately felt at home,' he says.

Anthonio, who films and photographs in Europe for major brands like Nike, Daily Paper, Adidas and Footlocker, decided to carry out his first independent project in Brazil. With 'Rivers of January' he wants to portray the full spectrum of youth culture. The project title is a literal translation of Rio de Janeiro: 'A river that emerges from a single source high in the mountains, and then twists and turns into strong-willed streams – I thought that was a beautiful image,' he says. The project's starting point was actually New York, where he took Portuguese lessons and a course on documentary photography at the International Center of Photography. 'This project is completely different from the fashion shoots that I'm used to. As a photographer, I have to make myself invisible. It's not about my story, it's about theirs,' he says.

'It seems that we're not so different from each other'

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ABOUT THE FUND

Creative Industries Fund NL is the Dutch cultural fund for design, architecture and digital culture, as well as every imaginable crossover. The Fund strives to make a substantial contribution to the quality of professional design practice within and especially between the disciplines of design, architecture and digital culture. Part of this endeavour is the interdisciplinary interplay between the cultural, social and economic domains. The Fund supports exceptional and innovative projects and activities of designers, makers and cultural institutions in the creative industries.

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What does it mean to be given room for a year to focus on artistic and professional growth? The Creative Industries Fund NL offers up-and-coming design talent this opportunity annually. With Talent Platform, the Fund aims to give their visibility an extra boost. View the 2020 cohorts in this publication and get an overview of all the design talent that the Fund has supported in recent years via stimuleringsfonds.nl/talentplatform.